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LOVE AND MARRIAGE

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In Earth and Heaven

BY THE REV.

T. H. PASSMORE, M.A.

Author of

"ST. PETER'S CHARTER," "THE SPIRIT OF CONFESSION," ETC.

"Love, unconquered in the fight—
Love, that lightest upon wealth."
SOPHOKLES, *Antigone*

"Thy Maker is thy Husband."—ISAIAH

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
	FOREWORD	7
I.	LOVE IN IDEAL	18
II.	THE IDEAL REALISED	35
III.	THE ORIGINAL FAMILY	45
IV.	LOVE CRAVES A CROSS	57
V.	GOD'S MYSTICAL MARRIAGE	71
VI.	MAN'S TYPICAL MARRIAGE	79
VII.	THE SANCTITY OF THE TYPE	95
VIII.	THE MORAL FALLACY OF DIVORCE	108
IX.	LOVE THE SAVIOUR OF LIFE	122
X.	LOVE'S UNVEILING IN MANKIND	133
XI.	OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LOVE	143
XII.	LOVE MAIMED FOR SPORT	150
XIII.	LOVE IN FLOWER AND FRUIT	162
XIV.	THE RIPENING AND REAPING OF LOVE	172

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LOVE AND MARRIAGE

FOREWORD

THE aim of this book is to find and formulate a philosophy of Love and of its seal in Marriage, which shall make clear to Christian intelligence the sacredness of this mystery, and the duty of preserving it inviolate.

In my inquiry about Love, I do not limit the term to the love between the sexes. It is in this form above all others that love, in our experience, may be said to centre its expression; about this focal point of love, accordingly, my thoughts revolve. Yet I no more confine love's power or range or destiny to this manifestation, than one would limit our divine experience to the Sacraments, or the activity of light to its concentration in a lens. My whole contention points the other way.

I postulate the essential mark and work of love to be the conservation of life. In Marriage, as in the whole upgrowth of that relation of male and female which Marriage crowns, that mark of love is most in material evidence. I accordingly take Marriage for my text, reason from it as a base, think in terms of Marriage as a type. But my study in Love leads me to the contemplation of

aspects and powers of Love as much greater and diviner than human Marriage, as this is greater than cattle-breeding.

My space is limited ; my theme stretches from the infinitesimal to the infinite : in expanding and contracting upon it, therefore, I must ask the grace of some mobility. I would be pardoned, then, for any uses and contexts of the vast word " Love," which may require the commentary of an intuition sympathetic with my vision.

For I humbly trust that, if the reader's patience prove co-extensive with my pages, he may catch from them some wider sight : some concept of the scope and magnitude of Love, in which Marriage will crown itself with a new sanctity, just because it will have fallen back into its right perspective—as an image of the True.

In any question of the nature of a thing, it is primary to seek the parallels between which it lies. I mean, to make examination of two points : first, its origin and purpose ; then, its " whence " and " whither " : what were the agencies which brought it into being, and to what end it was meant to serve.

I have applied this method to the principle called Love. The result of my quest, as will be found, is very definite. Perhaps I may sum it as the discovery that love is a conserving principle in life ; and that all life, and with it all love, is a cyclic Unity in God.

This finding is not original. But we trust that, as thought is creative, so everyone, who prayerfully

ponders truth and utters what he is given to see, may crave the honour of some small service to the Light which lighteneth every man ; whether as lens to focus it, as glass to mirror it, or only as prism to refract it.

For strangely these are days when light is rifer, and the love and obedience of it rarer, than in any generation since the Light Himself first came into the world ; the present need, therefore, is less of light than of fingers to point to it ; and none can do that, unless he himself have vision : which all men may invoke, but none may vaunt. If the vision be of God, who else shall vindicate it ?

I find then that love—using the term in its essential sense—is the brother-principle of life. It is a force or rhythm in life, which beats through it and preserves it against death.

In saying this, I posit God. For God is Life and God is Love ; and the Eternal Life, which God is, consists in Love. God expresses Himself in Three Persons ; and the Love, that circulates between Them, eternally produces Their Unity. Timelessly Person begets Person, and Person from Their Love proceeding seals Them One. Thus God is for ever Self-produced through Love. It is because God is Love, that there is One God, and that He abides in Unity for ever.

With all created life, *mutatis mutandis*, it is the same. All life known to us—plant, animal, man—is one ; and this life is made immortal by love. Organisms die, because life is locked up in corruptible matter : but life flows on ; and love is the

energic principle of the stream. The form and beauty of the love differs, upon a vast scale, with the ascent of life ; but the love is one, as the life is one ; and both are one together ; and that " one " is, in origin and purpose, one with God.

The secret of life's continuity (with exceptions which prove the rule) is a dual combine against death. Life is one ; it expresses itself in two organic modes ; of their congress, a third organism springs ; thus life's unity, in a ceaseless rhythm, is broken and restored for ever. It thus appears that the racial immortality of created life reflects, in principle, the Personal Immortality of God. The soul of both is Love.

Seeing, then, that God is the Source and Ground and Goal of all life, it seems that we must see in the act of creation a reproducing, as it were in embryo, of the whole Being of God. It seems that, as the spark of protozoic life was imparted by His Breath, so, inherent in that gift, and with it breathed into the organic plasm—that the dependent life, like its Giver, might be immortal—was this same principle of Love.

If my finding be true (and by my thesis it stands to be judged) it will appear that the key to the philosophy of love is the philosophy of life. This will mean that the history of love is the tale of an evolution twin with that of life.

Such a standpoint makes for a very beautiful and wonderful monism. It discovers a humbling awe in man's highest natural glory, and dowers what is lowly and uncomely with the more abundant honour.

For, if it be true, it teaches that the purest and most selfless natural love, unveiled in those exquisite products of Becoming which we know as man and woman, is one in kind, and aligned in evolution, with the crudest reproductive instinct of organic life; and, while in development almost infinitely nearer God, is in origin neither more nor less Divine.

Moreover, it does not stop here. In so great and so imperfect a glory it bids us look for something better still. It suggests most cogently, to every intuitive and thinking mind, that love and life, this "twin son and daughter" of God, are by no means arrived at their goal.

What that goal is we see in the Face of Jesus Christ. For He has made known to us that the destiny of life is immortal re-union with its Source. The racial and supersessive immortality, by which life has struggled up to man, is not the final purpose of God for life. He has reserved something better for His "offspring." Life is designed to vindicate, fulfil, and serve and crown for ever, the excellent goodness of God. To this end, the Immortality reserved for life is not racial at all, but Personal.

Now, if the preserver of life be love, this personal immortality, which through its probation is to emerge from the prison of matter and conquer death, must be energised by love. But the creature-love by itself cannot suffice for this. For its power is limited according to the mortal life in which it is lodged. It can reproduce that life in death's despite, but it cannot abolish death. Love's values cannot exceed the level of life's.

It appears, therefore, that both life and love have reached the limit of their spontaneous development. If the individual is to become immortal, they must both be reinforced from their Source. An infusion of the Parent Life (and this is saying, of the Parent Love) must be poured into the living organism.

This reinforcement has taken place. Its sphere is the Incarnation of God. In Christ, created life—arrived at the maturity of human kind and purged of fleshly stain—has been assumed into its original Principle, the Life of God.

And in Christ, with life, has been drawn up too life's "brother," creature-love, and set in confluent union with the Love from which it came. Like life, it was base and carnal, for it had served a mortal immortality; and, as touching its earthly function, serves it still. But this was never of its essence.

Now, purged and gathered up in Him, in Whom "all things are summed up" and "all the fulness dwells," it meets the Parent Love that comes to save, and the two are realised as One. Thus Love is revealed at last in his true glory. Hitherto he has dodged death; now he has consolidated his forces to destroy it.

Our Medium Christ, then—uniting and fulfilling in Himself all life and all love—proceeded to the Act by which He saves us. Self-identified with creature-life He realised, in His own experience, its destiny. He brought it to perfection by obedience; paid, upon the Cross, its debt of death; made actual, by Resurrection, its potential

Immortality ; and, in it, passed back into union with God.

Thus, in Him as Pioneer, life has achieved the final cause of its entire cycle upon earth. It has at last, not reproductively but directly, passed through death and found its Source.

And by what power did life, in Christ, regain this original immunity from death ?

The answer can be but one. Life, human or divine, has but a single principle of immortality. It was by Love that the whole mediatorial work was energised. Love Divine brought the Word from Heaven ; by love, Divine and human, created life through Mary became His own ; by human love He perfected that life, raised it from death, lives it for ever with His Father and ours. As in God and in the sons of God, so in the Medium who makes their union possible, the life of life is Love; and in that Medium Love itself, as Life, is revealed —an evolving Unity.

Yet further. In Christ life has attained its goal of immortality—as a principle. But how does it become possible for individual centres of life to appropriate this victory ?

They know this, who desire it. Christ's Human Nature is called His " Body." This " Body " is not, as we understand the term, an individual man. It is a Spiritual Principle. This Principle is extended as a sphere of " salvation." Had it been " A Man," it could not have been so extended. It is a Nature. By union with it, human souls

who desire to realise their destiny, can be "new-born." Taken up into it and sharing it, they can appropriate its prerogative : can receive "the right to become children of God."

Again, then, in this individual "salvation," the energic principle is love. Of all the many names by which Christ calls His saving relation to us, the most significant and the most sacred is "The Bridegroom." Those, all and severally, whom He unites with Himself in this new sphere and scheme of life, are called "The Bride." The whole content of His covenant with men, with its principles and persons, is "The Lamb's Wife." It is she who "new-bears" to Him the souls He saves. While each soul, too, is "wed" with Him, and brings forth for ever, as fruit to her Husband, her own regenerate and new-immortal self.

From this sublime conception, which pervades Scripture and is no mere figure, we get a flood of light in which love's whole evolution links itself up in one amazing cycle of completeness. We find that love, from the first dawn of life on earth to her final new-birth into the life of heaven, has never once abated his function as her law of living.

It is by Love that God, life's Author, Himself eternally Becomes. It was of the Love of the Father and the Word that life was first begotten. It is love that has convoyed life through physical death. It was Love that brought God to earth, Flesh-clothed Him, bore Him through death to victory, flowed with Life from His riven Side to quicken life. And it is by Love again, at the goal of life's probation,

that her Divine Husband new-begets—as it were upon herself—her own eternal perfection.

Thus, by Love, created life is ingrown into God. From henceforth the graft lives in the Parent, and by the Love-law of His Life bears fruit. Love has one more triumph, one more trophy; God's gloriously-insatiable Heart has one more pulse to quicken, one more flame to foster, one more child to cherish. God is glorified in His Saints.

What, then, is Love? What is it not? It is God on pilgrimage, the Son of God going forth to war. It is a red ray, shot forth through the white ray of life once sent out from God; and the double focus is the heart of the Incarnate. It is a Messiah descending into the clod, born without form or comeliness, growing up as a young plant, increasing in wisdom and stature and favour with God and man. It is like Christ; in a mystical sense it is Christ; "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, believed on in the world, received up into glory." It is the life of life, in God and earth and heaven.

And when we have thus seen Love in its glory and sanctity; when we watch it from its lowly infancy to its beautiful human unfolding, and follow it on to its transcendent revelation in the Christ: we are prepared for the mantle of protection, thrown over it so tenderly and so deliberately by the Bridegroom and the Bride.

"Marriage," says the Church [1] of God, "I ordain

[1] I use the word with no narrowing preoccupation, in its widest sense as expressive of the spiritual and personal concept

a Sacrament. As life is holy and for a holy end elect, so is love. Love has preserved life from the sod, and brought her hither to the gates of heaven. Love, sublimated and revealed in Incarnate Love, shall lead her through a Sacred Heart to the Throne of God. Henceforth, I shrine love in sanctity for ever. To them who invoke its joy and blessing, I commit it with My anointed hands—and My Bridegroom's grace to guard it—for life.

"*For life*, in that its bond is unity of body and its indenture sealed with the ring of My Espousals, which I have of My Christ and theirs. *For life*, because it is the ark of life and given to be the procreant means and cause of life ; of life that may descend into the regenerating laver which is My Body, that I, to My Living Husband, may new-bear it thence. Keep the gate of Love, for out of it are the issues of life ; and life is Mine—for Him ; and I am His ; and He is Judge !"

These, here briefly sketched and hereinafter amplified, are the considerations upon which I base my plea for "the sacredness of the mystery of Marriage, and the duty of preserving it inviolate." It has seemed to me that they are at once more ultimate, more cosmic, and more practical (if these be not interchangeable terms) than those commonly put forward by our teachers in this matter ; if, indeed, we are taught anything at all about it.

of the New Law which Christ has given for man and woman. My own ecclesiastical convictions may be quite definite : my plea is for vital values ; and I do not wish to straiten its scope, or prejudice its appeal.

Should they be judged, in mind or conscience, compatible with the "divorce" of persons united in Marriage by God and man and their own pledge of faith and act of union; or with the adultery of either of them, whether chartered or not by any church or State, with another; or with the procurance and perversion of married love, from its divine and natural function as the *Vis Conservatrix* of life, to the uses of a sensual pastime of the flesh: then, either in a false estimate of values, or in the faulty statement of a true one, I stand to accept the blame.

There remains, of course, an alternative conclusion; but that is personal to my judge.

T. H. Passmore.

3E Hyde Park Mansions,
London, N.W. 1,
July 1st, 1926.

I

Love in Ideal

What is Love?

No word is commoner, no experience more normal, no principle more variously valued and judged. Did I ask a hundred persons to write me their definition of love, not one would lack his theory, not one be at a loss for her ideal. Indeed, many would be quite sure that they themselves were the last authority upon the question. There are few things more talked of than love, still fewer more written of, and none, I should imagine, more thought about. Hardly, perhaps, even religion. Unless, indeed, love itself be a religion.

Yet to all his human temples love comes in a different guise, for every student of his mysteries he wears a different mien. It would almost seem as though there were not one love, but one for every man and woman. Are we to look on love as a kind of relativity, a subjective verbal idea inconceivable without a personal expression; as we might (wrongly) think of life, unimaginable apart from the living thing?

Nay, love must in some sense be an entity. It must exist; and, as existing, have qualities of its own. For it is identified, in Holy Scripture, with the Person of persons: "God is Love!" If this

be so, mean it what it may, love must be more than a mere relation. Even if for the moment we leave God out of account, love presents itself to us as a force ; more positively and arbitrarily than any other force, it seizes upon us and controls us. To deny that love is some kind of "thing" would seem to involve us in an obsolete materialism. Seeing that everybody knows what love is—or claims to know it—it must be something. For it would be hard to think of anything more hurtful than to be told, "You do not know what love is !"

That, nevertheless, is what I am fain to tell my readers—and myself. For it appears to me that a definition of love has not been found ; because when we try to visualise it in its whole scope and content, it seems to counteract itself. It crystallises into what, to our thought, seems a paradox. Love, to be notionally complete, must be continuous consummation ; what I may call an eternal moment. If love be the mere quest of something never realised, it is incomplete. If, on the other hand, it be pure attainment, it ceases to arise. While, if it be no more than these two things in alternation, it is not a unity.

I see nothing for it, therefore, but that it must be both in one. It seems that, in its ideal perfection, it is quest in attainment ; at once an Act and a State. It is therefore ineffable, or outside the circle of expression. Concerning love as a quest I might say much ; but in natural experience it has never been attained. Whereas, spiritually attained, it is inarticulate to ears of flesh ; it transcends, not speech alone, but thought.

Did I say love was contained in the idea of attraction or desire, I should but mock it. These things lie within it ; and are in themselves as much short of it as the tuning of instruments is short of harmony, or as rivers are short of the sea. The quest of love is a pain which is only justified by its implicit certain hope. If, on the other hand, I limit love to equilibrium of attraction, or satisfaction of desire, I kill it ; it fades out in negation, loses present being ; it is a spent force, a fallen star.

If I call it " the necessity of union," I describe a tendency and not a finality, an experiment and not a fact. It is pending ; not in being. Thus I " define " a non-final thing, a search and not a finding, a foodless hunger, an ache that must be somehow pain until it find its relief. While, if I view it in its fruition, my fault is only shifted. For does not love consist, at least, in desire ; must not appeased desire be, in very fact, the death of love ? This, then, is the elusive mystery of love : as a quest, it is imperfect ; as a compassed goal, it is not at all.

And further, if I try to make desire and possession one, I wed life with death in empty words. For I do not know, after all, what love desires. Is it Union ? And what is union ? Do the loving units crave to be one thing ? But it does not appear what that thing may be, save that it is not either, if it be both. Or a double thing ? But that were either the end of desire, or its endless mockery. Satiety, that greatest tragedy of earthly love, is a *reductio ad absurdum* of this paradox.

Or a third and different thing ? But a *tertium*

quid is not love, but death. Or, if "one thing," is it that one should be lost in the other? If so, then, which is love—to absorb, or to be absorbed? And, in either case, who arbitrates the generous rivalry, which (look at it which way you will) amounts, not to love, but to a successful yet unsatisfied selfishness?

It would appear impossible, then, to arrive either at what love desires, or to imagine anything it can desire, which perfectly attained would not make it cease to be. A sort of Nicene or Tridentine question with no hope of arriving at a creed! *Homo-ousion*, *homoi-ousion*, union, equilibrium, consubstantiation, transubstantiation, all alike appear to shatter what they solve. We thrust the fallacy back and forth and back again. Love seems to ask either for an ache eternal, or for eternal death. Is Love's self a fallacy?

And when in despair of the problem we turn to Mother Nature for her aid, she seems ironically to answer us, "Love *is* Death." All of us remember Maeterlinck's wonderful description of the love of the bee; how the Queen's wedding, solemnised in the blue ether, costs the elect drone his life. All through nature there are hints, suspicions of such a law. Love, as known to her, is the provision for immortality of that which dies; and we are made to feel that death is the purchase-price or rent of life, and love the bailiff.

He may disguise himself as the sweetest of boon-companions; he may smile, and give time of grace. Yet the mulct is sure. The lavished spark, which

is the gift of life, implies ideally the sacrifice of what it gives. Only, as it were, by grace of higher complexity, more various adaptation to environment, does the organism for a time survive its supreme self-mactation upon this mysterious altar of love.

Has the process a wondrous, distant goal—the eternal survival, by very Love, of loving things? If indeed God be Love, can love be death; is not Love, when truly known, the only Life? Yet, as so far we know love, it seems not so; he saves others, but cannot save himself. The creature dies, the race lives on. Love is life's eternity, but in the very need for its coming to us is the mark of death; the torch in its incessant passage leaves behind it an advancing darkness.

The secret, then, of the psychologic mystery of love's quest for union—is it euthanasia? Can love's selfish altruism be the mere decoy and pander of life's passion for the future, its unappeasable *Wanderlust*? Is the divine mutual yearning, after all, but the self-kindled pyre of the eternal phœnix of Being?

We must do better. For us who have seen love, there must surely be better to be known of him. Let us revert to Union, and think more particularly what it may mean. What is Union? We cannot conceive it, but by material pictures; and the idea eludes them all. It throws off every garment we would drape it with, and flees from us naked. In matter, three concepts come to mind, all of which we are wont to call by the name of union.

The first is Conjunction. A joint is made to

"unite" two leaden pipes. They remain two pipes, distinguishable as such. The only union is the bond; they are joined only by one part or side of themselves. They lie along independently; there is no blending of their atomic substance; and it is easily conceivable that they may be separated. This is comparable to the conventional idea of earthly marriage; and too often the analogy is practically justified.

A closer kind of union is Coalescence, or chemical union, where two units rush together to form a third thing different from either. It is so when two atoms of hydrogen unite with one of oxygen; the result is water. Here is a plausible picture; but it will not do for love. In the first place the union is only conditional and temporary, not permanent; an electric spark, and such unions can be dissolved; whereas whatever we do not know about love, we know that it does not tolerate separation as a possible idea.

In the second place, unless we think of the embodiment of the parents in the child—which is not love but its supersession—no "third thing" has any place in love's ideal. For the condition of love, seek as it will to lose itself, is duality; if subject and object cease, even temporarily, to be two, there can be no love; no more than there can be, if they cease to be one. While indeed, if it be worth mentioning, chemical union amounts after all to a change of "figure" in the dance of atoms, which rules the illustration out of court. Love asks more than a relative rearrangement of parts which behave quite selfishly still.

A third kind of union is Interfusion. As a picture, it is better than the former two ; as an analogy, it will bear less looking into than either. You cannot get this kind of union, materially, in any degree of perfection ; because it should mean at least such utter breaking, that between every two ultimate particles of the one thing there shall be one of the other.

But here is the picture. Two streams unite and form a river, which flows henceforward in one course. The particles are interfused and "inextricably" mingled together, so that there is oneness as complete as material can portray, yet no third thing is made—no molecule of water is changed. (I think of the junction, outside Geneva, of the Rhone and the Arve, where the two waters, the brown from the turbid glacier-streams and the blue from the plain, after a brief course of distinguishable confluence, flow mingled to the sea.)

Now the flaw in this picture, again, is the continued independence of the molecules. With all the apparent union there is a base which remains single still. (Is it possible that the whole fallacy of material parallels lies in complexity—that into the state of true Love there must enter that "Simplicity" which is God? But let this, for the time, be waived.)

A greater flaw is the impermanence of the union as an act. The streams flow together at a point, and are mingled ; and the point of confluence is the nearest type I know. But the substance of the confluence is only continuous change, the clash of two strange processions that meet and mingle, and

whose after-course together has ceased to be an act at all. Whereas the state of love must involve two whole and perfect beings in one eternal congress, their past and future determining into an eternal present oneness. Thus the value of the picture lies, not in the mingled channel, but in the act of confluence ; and this is but a symbol in terms of sense.

And yet our search for pictures is giving us a clue, if not to the problem, at least to the direction whither we must turn for light—if light there be. Love must be one of those mysteries which lie at the focus of two poles of thought : like the riddles of space and time, which between finity and infinity beat the imagination back and forth ; or the mystery of determinism and free will—things in whose regard, failing some spiritual or inner vision, we must be content to remain agnostic.

Love must be of these unthinkable things which resist the gropings and rakings of the brain, because it was never made for them. The search-light of the natural understanding, framed to sweep the little tract of Being which is our native bourne, extends its radius daily ; but ever along the plane continuous with it : we cannot see round the edges of our horizons. It is less wonderful that we should not, than that we should know so much of what is there, as to be aware we cannot know it.

But there is a light behind the brain. There is a consciousness which is in sympathy with God and speaks the language of all worlds, because itself comes out of God and is kin with Him. And in

that moon-like glow, if we will consent to turn down the glare of intellect and let it shine, there will at times appear, less to our understanding than to our mental peace, the images of things unknowable. It is not that in this way we "understand" them, but rather that we see them. The paradox in them ceases to vex us and make us wistful; we are put at one with them, in sympathy; their mystery distils about us and makes us content.

Of these ultimate yet spiritually visible things is the entity of Love. Love has its rudiment here; but if we would grasp a real thing we must study it in its archetypal perfection; no baser sample serves. And when, invoking this inner light, we strip love of all those accidents which so mar it here, and lay bare its ideal essence, we begin to see why we cannot grasp love as an attainable harmony nor relate it with itself. We discover why, if we cannot apprehend the mystery of love, we can at least locate and define our own inapprehension—and learn to wait in rest.

The reason lies less in what love is than in what it postulates. We cannot think infinity into words; and Love posits three infinities. A perfect love between two units demands in one a limitless receptivity, and in the other a boundless gift; and in both an endless life in which to give and to receive.

This is the mystery which lies at the heart of perfect Love, and this intuition of the difficulty is as far as the mind can reach; we can never "define" love, because it needs "infinity" for its expression. Yet even the power to enunciate the

wonder allays in some measure the ache of baffled understanding. In its very fathomlessness, if the "mind" will but lie quiet and prostrate, the spirit can find peace.

And when we further realise that we, with help and teaching from Love's Principle and Archetype, can ascend in the plane of experience to a better knowledge of this mystery of love than any groping of philosophy can yield us, our content is transfigured into joy. For knowledge is not guesswork, but spiritual relation; to apprehend a thing we must be, or become, kin with it. "To them gave He the right to become children of God." And only by this "cognition of cognation"—which we have already in potential of perfection—can we enter into the mystery of love.

And I have said in effect what in words I have only not said: that love, postulating the conditions I have named, must be, and therefore is, Divine; and—because Divinity, being Simple and Absolute, can have no conditions but Itself—more than divine: the very essence and Person of God.

None but God is infinite; none but God is a Complex in Simplicity. With none but God, therefore, is love in essence or in perfectness; nor can any creature love utterly or rightly either in regard of duty or of joy, or be loved in ultimate ideal, but in God, and as ensphered in that eternal Act, whose Subject and Object is God. Thus, from the philosophy of our poor intuition, we creep up to the greatest revelation ever given to the world: that "God Is Love."

Of this shortly. We are still thinking of love in

abstract concept, and of its connotations. We have seen that it demands conditions whose reconciliation transcends our mortal understanding. We are therefore fain to set the problem in the inner light of the spirit, which is "the candle of the Lord." And in that light we perceive it to be the greatest of those bi-polar mysteries, which make us faint because our mental vision cannot sweep both their terms into the field. We see that Love can be neither endless quest nor rest of attainment, just because it is both.

The two in our experience are too much at variance, and too often die in mutual conflict. Our loves consist too often in a pursuing which falls satiate at the goal. Loving with us is less an act than an experiment in action, and fails because its dynamic current is short-circuited; it is not directed into the thing we love, but, flowing round it, turns again, and so is lost in earth and self. What it seeks, in attainment kills it; because it seeks its own.

Passion, which we take for love, desires to take life, and ends in mutual slaughter; whereas love, craving to give life, discovers itself immortal. Passion is a blind hungry wolf that lives by hunting; after its feast of blood it wearies of the chase, and sleeps. Love gives its flesh and blood, and lives in what it feeds.

Hence it seems that perfect love, in mutual and continuous being, is a pure eternal act; a verb whose subject and object, by its perpetual action, are perpetually made one; a process passing ever

into consummation, an effect ever overtaken by its cause. It is eternal mutual confluence ; an endless self-emptying, self-outpouring, in which each infuses the other from itself without exhaustion or weariness. It is an exquisite jealousy of giving, each ever trying to outspend the other ; a unity ever discovered to be dual, and so continually new-begotten and self-known ; a prolonged penultimate, a blissful discord in eternal resolution.

What a string of stammering self-contradictions! One might be dreaming about God Himself. Yet who shall say that it is not so, seeing "God Is Love"? Is not God a Cause and an Effect at once, an Eternal Beginning and End, a continuous Act, an unresting Rest? Is not God the only Infinite, the only Simple? And when we think of Him, do not our thoughts always break against this paradox of Becoming in Perfection, ceaseless activity in eternal movelessness, all that is divine in passion reconciled with ineffable eternity of rest and peace? (I am still idealising about love ; and the more my vision clears, the more this consciousness unfolds, "Surely the Lord is in this place.")

For love in perfection, whose soul is quest of rest, could never lodge in any rest, except the divine rest of action, unimpeded and unspent. Take again from nature a symbol rather than a parallel. We learn of matter, not only that it is in ceaseless motion, but that it is motion ; that upon motion its existence as matter hangs. That all stuff is built of charges of electric force ; that if these tiny solar systems ceased an instant from their planetary whirling, their solid semblance would vanish like a ghost.

A pebble, a log, an ingot of gold, that lies so inert and still ; what is it but motion's self, bombarding sense, insisting upon existence, where rest—at least to our dull touch and sight—were nothingness ?

So it is with Love. If we know anything of it in its perfectness, its life is in its activity ; in its never-resting flow consist its stable rest and peace. Or from the infinitesimal ascend to the infinite : as the quiet star-lit heavens would not exist but for their ceaseless motion, so the profound peace of love, like the sleep of a top or of a spinning world, is the peace of a profound spiritual mobility, which alone is to live. Love is

> such a tide as moving seems asleep,
> Too full for sound or foam.

For love, though a perfect satisfaction (still I speak of it abstractly, though I know that you, with me, are running forward and visualising it in God), is by its very nature a search. They who happily attain to it, though satisfied eternally, are sated never. And this, not because they do not receive, or do not receive perfectly. They receive in never-abating fullness, for in this commerce each is all for giving, and giving is realised as receiving despite itself. But because there is always the knowledge that there is ever more to give, and in this knowledge the eternal hunger for the gift of giving it.

Yes, love is, first, giving ; but, because giving both blesses him that gives and causes him that takes to give in answer, it is doubly "taking" too. Without this mutuality, it would not be love in its

ideal as a state. The unrequited love of one is doubly noble, because it is the nobility of one for both ; it is not perfect as a state. Love is self-outpouring in an uttermost mode of completeness ; but, as a perfect state, it is in the same degree reciprocal, or its creative circuit fails.

Love is self-gift ; but, to quote the words of Mr. A. E. Waite,[1] "it is also an absorption, an indrawing, which takes over the other self ; the two operations proceeding concurrently, neither by one tittle yielding ground to the other, so that there is paradox of all paradox, seeking equation of paradox, something beyond duality, even beyond union, a state undeclared and unknown through all the world of seeking . . . an eternal progress in eternal approximation, in which thirst is never quenched, nor is hunger ever sated, though ministration has no suspension." Or, it may be said, there is always satisfaction, but satisfaction eternally breeds deeper desire ; a divine and most sweet resentment, each striving for ever to meet and outdo gift with gift.

Thus we begin faintly to glimpse the meaning of a seeming contradiction in Holy Writ. For in the Book of the Preacher, Wisdom says, "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty." Yet the revealed Wisdom says, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Here, I am sure, our Lord has in mind His Prophet, and with the touch of complement raises his thought into the perfect mystery. For "ever to thirst" would be

[1] *The Way of Divine Union.*

for ever to ache ; " never to thirst," which is merely to be sated, would be to die to love ; but to be satisfied and yet to thirst, that is to rise to life's highest and most blissful power—which is Love in being.

And our Lord goes on to show that the picture of the rivers, so far as we can form a picture, is the truest we have ; and, indeed, I drew it from His words : but how sublimely He transcends and perfects it ! " For he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting Life." Not the two rivers rushing down into confluence, a limited act and a spurious union ; but a metaphor which is itself a metaphor : a River unsealing a well and drinking from it as from a fountain ; the gift of Life ever appropriated by the soul, and, as the soul's own life, poured back for ever ; Christ Himself both Source and River and Sea.

So, more and more, we come to see that, as we get nearer to Love Itself, even duality shows signs of breaking down into subservience ; how there emerge, behind both parties to the ineffable transaction, the postulates of infinity to give and take and eternity to do it in ; how, in a word, on both sides of the equation, God appears. We draw in sight of the greatest of all mysteries, and are forced to raise the problem into its light : that God Is Love.

And in measure as the mystery deepens away from our levels of time and sense, we grow weary, and fain to fall out of the pursuit. You, it may be, drawn by the ever-alluring name and theme of love

to open these pages, are loth to follow further with me in my mounting ; the air grows cold and rarefied. Are we bold to part the veil of human tenderness, human passion—through whose folds Love shines upon us—and discover God ?—to learn of that warm and earthly sweetness, which we have been wont to acclaim as the last prize of soul and flesh, that it is not an end, but an experiment ; a phase, not a finality ; a figure, not a substance ; a sacrament, not heaven ?

Alas, the answer is the measure of our distance from that difficult path of Mystical Union, which is the only essay in the ultimate reality of Love. Perhaps, to those who have not yet known the wistful thought to set foot upon that way, our musings may seem but idle dreams in metaphysic. God does not spread in sight of any cold, careless, or slothful soul, as a snare, the joys He has prepared for them that love Him. A lover, if the heart of his beloved be virgin to him and yet to win, may get scanty help to his cause, even loss and prejudice, by lessoning her of the delights of love.

Yet we have set out to treat, later, of love as known to us ; we cannot separate this enquiry from some conference of Love's essence and perfection. How else, without a theory of the substance, shall we discourse of the shadow and the type ? How shall we determine the right use, the wise enjoyment, of a good thing given to us, without some question of the Giver and the conditions of the gift ?

Our loves, when worth the name, are kin with their great Archetype ; though marred and clouded, they are prisms of the true, and their broken lights

may teach us of it, as by their spectrum we learn the substances that are blazing in the stars.

> On the earth, the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect round.

We must then get some vision of the Whole, for marks to know the fragment by. For the corruption of the highest is the lowest; and there is nothing in heaven or earth more plausibly assumed than love, more easily misconceived, or more vilely counterfeit.

II

The Ideal Realised

In a word, then, though love be the crown of mystery, I will dare and draw into definition the result of my musings on it : "Love is Eternal Mutual Self-Gift."

And if you should ask me how I dare posit even this of love, seeing that no blessed Saint has ever returned from heaven to tell us what eye hath not seen nor ear heard, let me say that I have sat at the feet of the Catholic Church, and read the terms of the mystery in her cardinal doctrine about God. While I have tried to lead you in the guessing of an abstract thing, I have been glancing onward, like a teacher a few pages in advance of his pupils, to the Church's key of knowledge, whereby she opens to us the Being of God and bids us find our mystery hearted There.

The Saints know Love face to Face, but are inarticulate upon its theme. Caught into its rapturous eddy, it holds no secret from them, save the immortal miracle of its ever-deepening bliss ; and though they should control our tongues and pens, what word-stuff have we to offer them, that they should weave it into vesture for incommunicable things ?

But where God's blest ones are silenced by their

own blessedness, God has dowered His Bride, their and our Mother, with a mind and wisdom, that she should lift a little the veil of Love for us. And behold, it is God ! "Whosoever will be safe"—"pure at heart and sound in head," as touching this most vital of all themes—"must thus think of the Trinity." What no saint can tell the mind, God can whisper to the heart by faith ; for He reveals Himself.

It is into the awful apocalypse of the Social Being of God, that we look for Love's self-revelation. We learn on the best authority that God is Love ; and such vision as we have of this archetypal Love we owe to a revelation which the world, glad of an escape "from this tremendous Lover," finds the worst of stumbling-blocks.

Yet, when we shut ourselves in from the rattling tongues of wiseacres and look unprejudiced into that revelation, we find it to be—deepest of all mysteries as it is—an indispensable condition, not only of our faith in any God at all, but of all spiritual vision and of all ultimate thought. We find that, lacking or waiving it, we could never have believed at all in God as Love, or even as good, but—if at all—only as a monster of selfishness. In a word, the conception of God would have been impossible.

What is this basic truth ? It is that God has made Himself known to us, not merely as a Being, but as a Society. God, One Deity, is Self-expressed as a Trinity of Persons.

See now, not only why this is, but why it must have been ; why, were any philosopher himself a

balanced trinity even of human mind, soul, and spirit—logic, imagination, intuition—he must have postulated it from his own inner light ; why, as we see from Philo and the authors of the Wisdom Books, man was groping after it when the Light first shined from heaven.

God is Eternal. Past and future are nothing but His memory and will. Time and space are but the hall of mirrors in which He dwells ; His changeless present is expressed in the words, " I AM." Creation, in His infinite experience, is a thing of yesterday ; all up that gateless past eternity, at whose very naming our reason seems to shake, He lived—I had almost said, He lives—alone.

Yet—God is Love, and love is loving infinite and ceaseless. For God, being Simple, is not merely attributed by love ; it is His essence. In Him the cessation, for an instant, of the activity of love, and of its whole activity, were a missed heart-beat of Being, inconceivable. How, then, can God have lived alone ?

The answer, and the only answer, is that God did not live—in the sense of interiority—alone. That which we are instructed not to think of God as Existence, we should perceive to be unthinkable concerning Him as Love. The first revelation of the Trinity was not the Athanasian Creed ; it was the oracle of him who leaned upon His Breast—" God is Love." And the reason why this revelation demands a Trinity is the clear fact that it would have been impossible to predicate " love " of an Absolute Being, except upon the assumption of Relation in Himself.

And before I enlarge upon this fact—that Divine Love presumes Divine Relation—I will say more. I will say that this Relation, apart from love and in itself, was a condition necessary to any intelligent conception of God at all. Be God the Unity He is, a unit He cannot be. A Being irrelate within as well as without, a subject without an object, a pendent nominative without a sentence, will not go into thought.

The whole God-given light of understanding revolts against the fallacy of existence other than after the mode of relation. That which exists, as we know existence, exists according to its affections: it bears upon the rest of existence and is borne upon by it. There is no part or aspect of it that we can exempt from relation ; nor, peer behind the complex of interactions as we will, can we find reflected in our consciousness any hypostatic essence, anything of which we can say with conceptual sympathy, "This is Thing."

And this is the real reason why we could not conceive an Absolute God—nor, I make bold to say, could we be blamed for denial to His face —were His Absoluteness not translated to our reason by the knowledge that Itself inheres in relativity. (I am not stating that an unrelated Absolute would have been impossible ; I am saying that it would have been unthinkable, and that God should be unthinkable cannot itself be thought.)

We can think God, thank God ; for we know that, since God before and apart from creation can be related to nothing other, He is related to Himself.

The moment we grasp the fact of His Tri-Unity, we breathe again—and rest. We ask no more ; for at the price of mystery we have cheaply ransomed sanity. We can think God, because we know that His Unity, by expanding into a Threeness, produces Itself eternally ; that His Life is an endless rhythm between Three and One.

We can think God, because we know that God has a background : it is God. God has a πού στῶ : it is Himself. God has a sphere of action : it is God. God is Subject, Predicate, Object : all are God. We have at least a fulcrum for our thoughts of Him. He arises—still incognisable, still indefinable, but He can be spoken about. Further we cannot go. It is this which makes our religion possible before the start.

The doctrine of the Trinity is called a scandal, and foolishness. On the contrary, it is essential to monotheism ; and that God has, by revealing to us the fact, discovered to us the necessity, is an evidence at once of our blindness and of His truth. Consciousness has two eyes—reason and faith—and God is seen at their focal point.

But further. We need not only a God Who can be, but a God Who can be respected. We need a God Who is worthy of our devotion and of our hope. And this, too, is assured us by the revelation of the Trinity. For what we can see to be necessary to God as Existence is even more clearly essential to Him as Love. If He is not Love, He is Terror ; and if as a Unit He could not be, certainly so He could not Love. Had we been left in this difficulty —even if we had forced our minds to admit His

existing—we could never have formed any rational conception of Him as loving.

Now that we know Him, however, as a Personal Relation, our mental mirror is cleared. We can find in our consciousness the image, not only of God, but of a God Who is a Friend; a God Whose service is not only the duty of creatures to their Master, but their highest and only Good—because He is a God of Love. These things should be clear to those who think. But talking religious amateurs do not ordinarily think.

The mystery of God's Being, then, is like the Epiphany of Bethlehem. All we can do, on entering, is what the Magi did: to lay down our gifts of Intuition, Reason, and Faith at His feet, and adore. But we could not even have found the shrine, save as guided by some supernatural light. The Wise Men were guided to God's cradle by a Star. The Star that lights us to the rudiments of Divine knowledge is the mysterious but spiritually intelligible conception He has given us of Himself in the revelation of the Blessed Trinity. By the light of knowing that God can Exist and Love, we find the footpace of the Absolute. The lesson of the Three-One, which is called an ecclesiastical paradox and scorned as an impossible concession to priestcraft, is really nothing but God's first Self-introduction to our blindness.

Only by following this Star can we find God, if we are bent on truly knowing Him. You remember that the Magi went first to Jerusalem. They assumed that the King would be born in His

Capital, the great seat of power and intellectual religiosity. All they found there was a jealous and hateful Herod ; and all that came of their mistake—except their own loss of time—was the massacre of the Innocents. They might have known that His birthplace would be poor and lowly Bethlehem ; even the priests knew it—it was written in the Prophets.

It was not the Star that led them to Jerusalem. The Star had disappeared when they turned aside from following it. Only when they realised their error did it show itself again—and led them on till it "stood over where the young Child was." We shall never find God in the proud abode of human wisdom. We shall but lose our way. Only this Star of Truth can direct our faltering steps. We have to enter this lowly gate of faith, stand in this poor intellectual stable of "paradox" : "He that will be safe, must thus think of the Trinity." It was written in the nature of the case ; but so blind are we that we required a Star to make our own vision visible.

And, having done its work, the Star disappears. It cannot illuminate the Mystery ; it can only show us the way. We cannot understand the Trinity when we contemplate it. But, had we never learned it, we could never have found God aright. We can now get to know more and more of God through Christ, until we know even as we are known.

But it will be the knowledge that comes, not through reason only or chiefly, but through the illumination of faith, the assimilation of an obedient will, the unitive culture of love. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child

with Mary His Mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him ; and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto Him gifts."

We know, then, that God is an Eternal Society. Love, in its ideal perfection, lived and beat before all worlds, in the Bosom of the Holy and Undivided Three-One. God's Love is God's Being ; the episode of Creation is but an extravagance of it. The Absolute, who is the Source of all, eternally begets a Son, His Project, His Object, His Word, because "uttered" by Him ; equal with Him, because self-expression is self-projection ; distinct from Him, because it is also self-externalisation ; one with Him, because it is also self-realisation.

In this Word, then, because God is Love, goes forth God's whole act of love. More : Love is the very act itself, by which God generates ; loving and begetting, with God, are one ; and this Personal act, which is itself Love, eternally becomes a Second Person, Who is Himself the Love that generates Him ; so that in God the verbal and the substantival pass into one another : "To Be" distils in Being.

We have no shadow of this mystery in any earthly act. Our neuter verbs remain neuter. However intensely I may "think," "desire," or "be," I do not thereby precipitate myself, or project another being, or, indeed, anything at all—unless it be some flimsy thought-form, futile save to get enmeshed, perhaps for harm, in some other mind, before it fades. Man and wife, indeed, project their joint image in their child, and that this is a sacred materialisation of the Triune wonder we shall amply see ; but how faint an image of the

transcendent mystery by which the Father "thinks forth" the Word!

For my thought is not myself or even part of me; it is but a passing wave upon the grey tissue of my brain, and ere I can speak it is changed and shredded away into the past. It makes me what I am, nay, sometimes, proceeding out of my heart, defiles me; but it can never pass into an object, for this least of reasons, because it is not I, either in essence or in abiding.

But God thinks God; and, so thinking, becomes God, and yet remains Himself. And, because God is Himself eternal, the act is timeless; and, because being, with God, is loving, the act is Love; and "God of God," "of the Father's Love begotten," is Love's Fullness all made known to us. For it is He—"the Radiation of His Glory and the Impress of His Substance"—Who has been found in fashion as Man.

Yet this is not enough. To say that the Father is Love, and that the Son is therefore Love because He is the Expression of the Father, is not to say that the Son loves the Father, or the Father the Son. We know Two Persons; but this predicates nothing of any relation between Them. God's Life is Love; and "as the Father hath Life in Himself, so also to the Son He gives to have Life in Himself"; but all that this in itself involves is mutual contemplation. "The Word was towards [1] God, and the Word was God"; but in the Word's abstraction from the Father, I see merely separation.

[1] πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.

That Love should face Love, and there an end, were less than loving. There must be Love between Them. As in the world of physical things, so in God, I see no action without a Medium. The very fact that God should stand apart from God can only be in the interest of God's Unity. In whom, then, can God be united with God, but in God?

We read that "the Father loveth the Son, and the Son loveth the Father"; where is the Love Itself, that they exchange for ever? Must not that very Love have Personal expression; in which case, if God is Love, must not that Love be God?

Here, to the rescue of our reeling sense, comes the revelation of a Third Divine Person, in Whom Father and Son are both Two, and One. Him projecting, and in Him inhering, God's duality—which else were mere schism in the Godhead—becomes through Trinity the manifestation of His Unity.

The love between the Father and the Son, expressed as a Person, is the Holy Spirit. There can be no act in God, which is not itself God; and this Third Person, Who is the Act of Relation between God and His own Expression, is God Entire. He is the Very Consciousness of God, "searching[1] the depths" of God; the Self-knowledge by which God is known to Himself as Father and as Son; and the very knowledge is Love's Self. Thus God Himself rounds and makes full that eternal vortex of love, which is ever in blissful motion because He is Three; and, because He is One, ever complete in perfectness and serene in rest.

[1] 1 Cor. ii 10.

III

The Original Family

Now, then, the time is come to link up our thoughts, to carry our ideals to the Real, our groping speculations to the Arbiter of Truth. Our philosophy of Love in being : will it bear the test and canon of Love's Self revealed ?

We approach in hope, for our meditations were in spirit Christian. We reasoned from that vision of human love which Christ has set before us, the pure, the faithful, the self-giving, and the true. We came at some conception of what such love, in that abiding perfectness which is love's right, can be. Is it a dream ? Surely all our best thoughts are dreams, when we muse of "that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." Yet it may be that, if we think truth, our dreams come true.

And what we dreamed of true Love, it seems, though dimly glimpsed and worded haltingly, need not shrink before the Light. For it is the Love that circulates for ever in that Triune Bosom, unexhausted and unchanged, which archetypally answers to all that I have so far surmised of Love in abstract perfectness.

For what is it but Three eternal mutual Self-outpourings, a maelstrom of selflessness, ever-seeking and ever-satisfied ; a reciprocity that vies to give and is evermore defeated by receiving ?

Here, in God, is the substance of all real love ; the white source of all those rays that straggle to us, and which our cloudy souls so refract and dim. Here, in God, original and perfect, is that eternal Confluence of two eternal Streams, in which we found a type of Love, or the shadow of a type ; but how inexpressive, how unworthy of the truth !

For our streams approached from separate sources; but the Father and the Word, ere ever They are Two, are One. Though our waters mingled, their atoms were separate still ; but Person interpermeates Person in a unity which were thinkable only as identity, save for flow eternal. The blended rivers ran away together and were lost ; but God's Love circles back entire upon Himself ; for the Word, being generated of the Father's Love, knows no will but reaction to His Source. The confluence of the rivers was a spate of change ; but the congress of the Father and the Son is itself the Eternal Spirit. The picture was without origin and without finality ; but the Three Persons are, all and severally, Source and Stream and Sea.

From such a contemplation we turn our dazzled eyes. But if our vision be dazed, it is neither distorted nor distressed. Mystery is here ; not mystification. " He therefore that will be safe " : " safe," in thinking of the Tri-Une, we feel and are. And we have learned one great corollary of truth, to carry with us—when we come to trace Love's pilgrimage through the wondrous cycle of creation —like a lamp lighted from the altar. It is that love, from the height to the depth and back again,

in heaven or earth or newly-born in heaven, be it self-manifested in the Creator or incarnated in the creature—if it answer to Love's true nature—must be Tri-Une.

In the Trinity of Persons we have the Ideal Family, the model of that social unit of humanity—Father, Mother, Child. The curiosity, to particularise the individual incidence of these functions or characters, is forbidden alike by theology, reverence, and religious feeling. The Divine Persons are One and Co-Equal ; we may not dare to discriminate Them in any prism of our making. Their mysterious "Circum-incession" baffles all our brain-bound efforts to delimit their relativity as Persons, beyond the sufficiency of that which is written and given. We know Them only by their Acts ; and these, even as we gaze and feel, pass on in processive glory round the unbroken cycle of Their Being. For They "co-inhere" in One Another, and the act of Each is the act of God.

The mind that contemplates the great Dogma of the Threeness in the Oneness must be like the most delicate of balances. "Rightly divide the word of truth," and truth may be counterpoised with truth, till heaven answer heaven ; but you must preserve the equation of your scales, for a host of heresies lie waiting on the one side and on the other ; and the hatred of heresy is part of the serious love of Truth. For "Doctrine unto fools is as fetters on the feet" ; [1] but to the wise who would attain to heavenly science, it is their firs emancipation from the chains of darkness.

[1] Ecclus. xxi 19.

So all that we can predicate is this : that the Tri-Unity of Love is law in heaven and earth. Yet, with reverent care, we may draw our thought a little more to definition ; though even so we shall find ourselves straitened between alternatives. The order, in which we are given to think of the Co-Equal Three, is authoritative and clear. The Son and Spirit depend from the Absolute Source, and the priority of the Son (*pace* the Orthodox Churches, whose difference from the West amounts to a question of definition) attests the dual Procession of the Spirit.

But the Co-inherence of the Three Persons relieves us from understanding by this order a descending process, as though God's Self-production, so to speak, terminated in the Spirit. God's Being is a Cycle of Becoming ; and the revelation, that the process is orderly, is not intended to imply in any way that it is finite. When we get to the Spirit, we are, as it were, sent back to the beginning ; the Spirit is the Consciousness and Bond of the Father and the Son. Thus the very truth, which safeguards the discrimination of the Persons, opens in some sense the question of Their relativity.

The co-equality, then, of the two derived Persons seems to warrant, within cautious limits, an alternative reading of Their order. " Father, Son, and Spirit " ; " Father, Spirit, Son " : either reflects a true conception of the mystery, and both reveal the complete circuit of Love—the dual Union perfected in Three.

We think, as we are taught to think, of the

Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; and recall the strange conception of the Logos as the fair and beauteous Woman-figure, Wisdom, Who "was daily God's Delight in the beginning," and whose "Fruit is better than gold."[1] Or we think of the Spirit as the Mother-Principle, eternally fruitful to the Father, as when at time's beginning this Dove brooded over chaos, till Light was born.

And even if we may not ask of the Spirit's part in the Eternal Generation of the Word, His function in the Temporal is clearly told. For here the Cycle seems reversed upon itself; the Father seems to devolve His Act upon the Spirit; the Motherhood passes over into Mary, in whose pure deeps the Creator-Spirit, her Spouse, begets the true Light of Light, the Word made Flesh.

Through the Incarnate Life this Paternal relation of the Spirit is maintained, until after the Resurrection-perfecting. Then, another reversal comes: the Human Christ has triumphed—the Spirit, erewhile His Mentor, becomes His to give to the Church His Bride; and She in her turn brings forth to Christ, as Mary to the Spirit, a "Man-Child"—that mystic Body of Christ, whose destiny is to be "caught up" to God and reign with Him for ever.[2] Thus "the mystery of God is finished." Like all mystery, its phases change as dream melts into dream; but in every phase we have the same unvarying thought: the fulfilment of Two in Three; the Family; the fruitfulness of Love.

[1] Proverbs viii 30, 19.

[2] Rev. xii 5.

Here, then, is the Origin and Pattern of all fatherhood, all motherhood, all sonship, all wedded love and love of friends whose love is blest with issue, whether dower of children in the former case, or fruit of virtue or any good thing; here, the canon and the measure of all that claims the holy name of Love.

For though love may appear in many forms and avatars, yet Love is but One. Love is Self-Gift, and sterile love is fallacy in terms; for love ceases to be, if it cease from fruitfulness. "Love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God"; but if he or she, according to the several kind of their love, bring forth no fruit, their love is not true to Pattern. The individualism of two, though it wear the garb of love, is a departure from an eternal Type—from which there is no appeal.

And so we understand why every unipersonal God—a Zeus, an Allah, an Odin—has come to nothing; because such a fungus upon human conception can endure but for a night. Once illumined with the truth, we look back and realise that such a mere "Person in Possession" was unthinkable; he could strike no root into our thought. Such a bugbear could not have been born, except through the superstition of animists who fear rather than think or love. Polytheism was man's flight from him, the Old Covenant his designed exposure. And the Church of God has sealed his fate for ever; concerning whom it may be said, that the tried foundation she has laid for us warrants our faith in the whole structure she has built thereon

For by what possibility or right should an Individual, who can show no credential more divine than "unity"—which, without Plurality for a background, is meaningless—and cannot tell how he attained it, claim to cause and reign? In the very fact of his frightful loneliness, he would be self-condemned for ever. Unmated, unrelated, he could bear no fruit; pretending to produce creatures, he would but satirise his impotence to produce himself. Love or tend them he could not, for love would not be in him; they would curse the day that they were made, as did the logical prophet Job because there was "no Daysman."

Could he have been, he could not have been good; goodness is social; his very existence would have shamed him, an autocentric selfishness. A wastrel will, incapable of conference, alone in the vast and waste Sahara that was his own miserable and dreadful soul; a solitary interest, powerless to please aught but the indirection of its own caprice: behold the very seed of evil; here, ready-made, see the Moloch of bloody sacrifices.

Such an ogre could not but be the "God of battles." It is when a nation deserts, for such a "god," the true God as revealed in Jesus, that the beast comes back in lust and blood and fire. The beast, indeed, was better off without, than man with, so horrible a god. For such a god, made in man's own image, is himself the creation of man's heresy against love. The bare fact that love exists on earth refutes him. In the Source, the highest product must find place and origin; from a loveless First Cause, the evolution of a nesting bird-pair

would have been impossible ; under his dominion, Calvary would never have gone into thought.

Briefly let us review our steps. At the outset of our study we tried to form some concept of love in fruition, as a perfect act in perfect being. The ideal to which our thoughts pointed us was this : Love, raised to its highest power, is Eternal Mutual Self-Gift. For test of this theory we raised our eyes—in the light of the Church's ancient wisdom, at which the wise shall not ask in vain—to the ineffable Sanctuary, where all real things are caused and fulfilled ; whence Being arises, where it reigns in soul and substance, and whither, to endure, it must return.

There we found all we sought, and more. We found, first, that in our conjectures about Love we were really theorising about God. We were daring greater altitudes than we deemed. Speculating in heart's philosophy, all the time we were asking how the Great Heart beats ; how God exists ; how the Arch-Life fulfils Itself. Existence, we found (which is in the ultimate sense God), is much more than a Person. It is an Act. God is ; but we have reached an even more ultimate truth when we say that God loves.

For it is by loving that He Is. His Love is all of Him. In and by it He consists. When we come to see that to say " God is Love " is naming God by a verb rather than by a noun, we bethink ourselves of what is given in every perfect verb, every verb that is not neuter and therefore ineffective ; a Subject and an Object. In the case

of such a verb, the verbal idea goes over from the Subject to the Object. In the completed idea, therefore, "there are three that bear witness."

God, then, must be a Triad. But He is a Triad only to be One. His Trinity is the very ground and fulcrum of His Unity. In "unity" there must be something to unite; and God Himself is a vortex of union, through the Act of Love which is Himself. He is One because, by the utter passing of Three Persons each into each, without rest or intermission, He is ever becoming One.

And, as His Unity requires plurality, so His Life, which is perfect Rest, requires motion. Idly we conceive of the continuity of life as a dead inertia, knowing full well, if we would think, that, in the very organism, life is a becoming, a continuity of change. So God's Life is in His continual intro-motion; God is Yahweh, "He Who Will Become." Nothing but death is changeless; and though God change not as we count change, it is by the metabolism of His intro-fluent Love that He is the same and His years shall not fail. It is this unresting rest that has passed into all that He has engendered; every solar system, celestial, organic, or atomic, that consists by intro-action, is in that measure a picture of God.

And what is the open secret? Surely it is that *Love is the Life of Life.* In God it is so; in no creation can it be other. By Love, as by a self-creative process, God produces and prolongs Himself: the active principle of His immortality is Love;

it is as truly and as purely energised by procreation as any product and image of it among things that live.

There is but one Life, for there is but one Source of life. The life in plant and animal, the life in man, is but the slow up-blazing of a spark, a seed of fire clay-kindled from that Triple Unity of Flame. How could we call Him Father, either by nature or by grace, if we were not sprung from Him ; how return to union with Him, if we were not "also His offspring?" In Him Life abides ; in us it flows from form to form : it is marching through the realms of death, yet death cannot engulf it ; it evades, and passes through—until it win back to Him Who waits to own and to invest His "son."

What, then, is the principle or power that works in this dependent, pilgrim life to sustain it through the circuit of its incarnations? Must there not be some determined purpose behind the impulse of these hosts that hurry onward, running whither they neither know nor care, brandishing their torches till the oil is spent ; that have no conscious joy but in the race, and no hope beyond : what spirit holds them, that, to successors they will scarcely see, each must hand on the flame before it fails? Is it not the "homesickness" of life, the "son" of God? And what is the force in life, empowering it to pour thus precipitately through the domains of death? What is this rhythm, pulsing ever through the headlong stream ; this law of oneness in duality, of two made one that they may be three?

Is it not the spirit of love? For life in God's creature, as in God, is one ; and in the creature, as

in the Creator, the perpetual cause of life is love ; and love and life are one, and are known as one—where the stream weds with the Sea.

When we stoop our necks to the Catholic Faith we get a vision of the unity in things. The paralysis of the power to learn of God is due to the atrophy of the diviner part of consciousness. Faith is not a straining adaptation of the natural brain, which is a mechanism evolved rather for the limiting of perception than for its sublimation. It is a divine reflection in the mirror of the soul, which is the very consciousness of life. It is an interior sympathy with God, bred of our natal kinship with Him and quickened by His grace.

Referred to this image, and recognising it, let reason act as did Elijah at the still small Voice : he " wrapped his face in his mantle," and stood to hear. So bow and listen, and you shall find no hurt to your understanding. The brain, in effect says Bergson, is not the mind, but only one of many functions of it. Reason, learning her true place in the council of the soul—whereof she is the youngest and not the wisest member, though her voice may be the loudest—can never lose either in experience or in efficiency.

Let Reason, when God has spoken, give Faith a hearing, and weigh well its counsels. Sitting as learner, not as judge, in the discovery of her own limits she may come upon precious things. Her true and inestimable value will unfold itself at last. She will wonder, will discriminate and order ; she will illustrate, will formulate—nay, she will create,

and not be put to shame. And in her wonder, not least, will be her strength. What edifice of human thought—

Founded, fearless of flame, flat on the Nether Springs—

may not reach to heaven ?

And the God of heaven is Love ! And He lives by loving ; therefore to love is to live. "Love is of God ; he that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth Him." "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love ; he that loveth not abideth in death." Worshipping God, we worship love ; and never more than in rightly loving do we realise God's image in ourselves. Spiritually, as physically, only by loving can we truly live ; and not to love is to fail from out the stream of life—to die.

IV

Love Craves a Cross

Now from this Divine Ideal of Love we learn that love in perfection is not at all the bandied luxury of two, as many suppose, but a social bond whose personal scope is limitless.

God is Three Persons. Were He Two, love might have been thought a dual thing. But in the Triad, which is the lowest plurality and a type of infinity, we are given at once the Social concept. A duality, as such, is unproductive ; expanded in a triad, it is fruit in evidence.

The numeric content of a Society is a quantity indefinite and limitless. In the Trinity, wherein Love circulates as an arterial stream, we have the earnest and the model of a loving universe ; as in Abraham and Sarah and Isaac was furled the potential and the promise of a seed as the stars of heaven for multitude.

And, in this Threefold Sodality of Love, all those dependent qualities are proposed, which ideally bind the whole world in one about the feet of God. The filial relation, by which all living have the right to call God "Our Father," is first realised in God Himself. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing." Of one substance, power, and Godhead with the Father,

the Word nevertheless by His derived Being—*in gremio Patris*—sounds for the whole creation the overture of worship, reverence, fear, obedience, and prayer; while the Father, "loving the Son and giving all things into His Hand," "hearing Him always," "sanctifying Him," "glorifying Him," initiates all those parental instincts—progenitive, protective, nutritive, directive—by which innumerable life assures its immortality.

And in the Spirit, Who seals the Bond Triune, is seen the archetype of all relation and all union; of home and family, of brothers and sisters, of all kinship, of all friendship; of love and marriage, and all fruitfulness in flesh and spirit; of clan and tribe and nation, of state and polity, of all alliance, commerce, comity, and mutual help; of the inherent fellowship, underlying all strife and strangeness, that binds the human race; of the unconscious sympathy that knits all life; of that ether in which the stars are embedded; of that sea of relativity, whose tossing billows upbear the sum of things.

Of all that vast complex of being, manifold yet one, which our instinctive monism calls the universe; of all harmony, all concert, all adaptation, which produces, prolongs, and becomes for ever; the Three-One is the Exordium, the Mould, and the Final Cause. The whole of existence may be summed up as "Action and Reaction in a Medium"; and that, raised to the power of perfection, is God; and God is Love. And it has pleased the Father to sum up all a second time in Christ; and Christ is God.

That love is a universal medium, then, God

Himself bears witness in heaven. True love is more than a mere lightning-flash between two drifting clouds. Like electricity, love has its polar strains and reactions, its storms which can both create and destroy. They are but centres of disturbance in a sea which bathes all worlds. I think of love as radio-active ; it goes out in an expanding sphere from God and from all hearts which God indwells, and, like etheric waves, engulfs and permeates all it meets ; and every heart, whose beats are tuned to its vibrations, records and answers it.

I see no limit to that radiation, either in time or scope. All dynamic energy, by its law of inertia, if unresisted, must beat on for ever. What obstacle can block the path of love, that love cannot both flood and penetrate ? Not evil ; for evil is not a thing.

Evil can neither intercept nor appropriate the waves of love, for evil is but the lack of love itself. As the sun's rays pierce, all ways, the interstellar cold, so does love strike through the evil in its path ; but the sun is not warming the cold, for the cold is but the negation of it : it is causing the sluggish ether to vibrate. So, for love, evil has neither being nor resistance ; love's power and care is to thrill the stagnant medium with its vital force, which is Divine.

For all things that live are dear to love, because love is own brother to life ; and the evil in them is but its opportunity ; it does not fight with evil, but negates it by creating good. Like a fire it kindles other fires, and only grows so much the more ; and

in ten thousand foci, like the burning sun, it is present in its whole image of light and fire.

And though in God's Being love answers love with a thrice-eternal and perfect reciprocity and satisfaction, yet that is necessary to love only as a perfect State. As a perfect Act, it is not necessary to love that it should be so answered, or be answered at all.

Not that I believe any true love can be wholly and for ever without answer. There is, I suspect, a law of love that it shall always, somehow, somewhen, be answered and returned ; even as no force can be destroyed, though it sleep a myriad years. As I reap, from this fire of coal, the radiant energies of a prehistoric sun, so to-day some act of selfless love, locked a thousand ages in that chancery of merit which is destiny, may leap to life and warm me, and my heart send out a ray in answer.

So the Cross, though "it is finished," is the eternal hearth of poor cold souls ; so Christ's caress, as He blessed the little children two thousand years ago, is known and answered in many a child-like heart to-day. Love is a patient usurer, but a wise ; it is strangely apt at getting back its own in time, and more—though it does not price itself, or wrest security, or bargain, or distrain.

Yet unrequited love, though it be never love complete, may yet be perfect. And it is oftenest at the cost of this incompletion, seemingly, that love is perfected. For Divine love, as we have seen, is universal ; love would seem therefore to be the more excellent, as it approaches that ideal scope ; in that same measure, then, requital must be the

less in quest or hope. Love's excellence, therefore, must stand in its selflessness.

Hence it would seem to follow, that in true love there is content of sheer desire for sacrifice. And, in love's highest height, I believe that this passion is the burning heart of love. Its desire to spend is so inordinate, that while it cannot help its ache to be requited, it will make a luxury of it; its joy and pride will be to throw that very longing upon the altar. It would thrive upon the pain of thanklessness, and count its sweet sorrow a cheap price for the blissful monopoly of giving. It would abdicate all, abase itself in ashes, shoulder the blame unmerited, ask for spurning, so covetously is it set to cheat its cherished rival of the least advantage in self-gift. Nay, better; did it perceive (and love alone has eyes) that he too ached to give, then, casting this passion too upon the altar, it would turn—and take.

It feasts on its own hunger, and the wine of its own tears. It craves, despite itself, to take, and therefore glories to give and to forgive; fearing advantage in forgiveness, it grasps at shame and penance, feigning the fault its own, and thinking it. Its despair is, not to be needed; it could almost find it in its heart to inflict a wound, that it might tend and heal.

Or, rather (for in this tournament of gifts its counter-moves are endless), it would count it a prize to be useless, and to hide itself for ever from those loved, if their welfare stood in its dismissal, or their content in its detachment. Its richest banquet is to gird itself, and serve; without some spice of

martydom, its tasks are savourless; and because it would glory in not being, if its end should stand the beloved in any stead, its highest heaven is a cross.

You will say, that I idealise; that you have never seen, in being, this love all-unselfed, which I describe. Nay, but you have seen its broken lights —or how I pity you! At certain revealing moments of your life you have caught glimpses of its presence in this world of sordid aims and lurid passions. Perhaps you have felt, from some rare heart now still, its gentle glow raying out and folding you; or, more blessed yet, it may be that the ray has been born in your own heart, the virtue has gone out of you and blessed you in the going.

Such gleams are, at best, poor and partial here; but they are authentic fire. They prove a Sun; and their energic waves, though they may pass into new force-forms, are not spent.

> There shall never be one lost good! What was,
> shall live as before.

Who that has known a mother's love, that whitest passion possible to human flesh, can refrain that great induction, which is reason's vision of God: that there is a Divine and perfect Love, which delights to "make much of nought," and from whose Fire of fires all our nobler loves—the love of a mother-bird as of a Monica—are kindled?

Now this stooping, suffering Love, whose spring I seek in God, I dare with awe to find implicit within the eternal, blissful involution of the Trinity. In that infinite out-passing of the Father which,

determining in the Word and becoming His very Substance, conjoins Them in the Person of the Spirit, there is Self-Gift all-transcendent, trine, and absolute. But there is no Sacrifice.

For that never-ebbing tide of Love is perfect reciprocity. The Son, being "the effulgence of the Father's glory and the Impress of His Substance," is Himself a living Act whereby the Father is Self-realised and Self-glorified entirely and eternally. The Spirit, Who is the utter Self-Procession of the Father and the Son, exhausts untiringly the unexhausted Love of Both and saturates them with One Another, perfecting the cycle of Godhead in an act of bliss unending.

In such Self-Gift there is no pain or loss; in such bliss there is no yearning, no wistfulness, no renunciation. The Blessed Trinity is the highest power of Love as a Perfect State. For Love's ideal as a perfect Act, our cautious minds, experienced otherwise, are fain to ask something less. Or something more?

For, though from the plurality of Persons I drew the ideal of a universal love, and thence deduced that such a love must involve self-negation and therefore must ask for sacrifice, I do not discern this ideal in the Trinity. That it is There contained in essence, I make no doubt; for all good things are generically and originally in the Good; but it is implicit, not explicit, there.

Of such a love, pain and evil are necessary conditions, for self-sacrifice supposes suffering, and pardon presumes sin. The foreknowledge and contemplation of the eventuality of evil, therefore,

must have been present to the Council of the Three-One. Yet in no sense can I think of that holy Circle as containing anything untoward, either in germ, or type, or purpose.

Here we come against an old, vexed mystery; but we will allow no riddle to decoy us, knowing all we do. We know that we must not, cannot say, that God created evil; we know, indeed, that we need not say it, for "evil" is but the shadow cast by mortal wills in the orient Light of God.

But I will assuredly be bold to say that creation, which *ipso facto* involved the appearance of evil, was necessitated by an abyss within the abyss of that too-blissful Tri-Une Love. This need in Love arose from the very excess of its all-perfect quality. Out of the infinite happiness of the All-Heart arose its insatiable urge to pity, to suffer, and to save.

Here is a peak of daring thought; let me ascend to it more gently. In the Love that circles in the Bosom of the Absolute there exists a mysterious incompletion, which is the price or penalty (I trust to be understood) of its perfection. This is the most wonderful of its wonders, the most beautiful of its beauties, and the crown of its glory. It is the need of Sacrifice.

Deliberately I submit that God did not take our flesh and die to meet an unforeseen emergency. He begot us, and drew us through our difficult path of sonship, knowing that our need would justify His Love's necessity—to take our flesh and die. For only through the "happy fault" which gave Him scope for Sacrifice could any creature grow to crave and share that crushed-out sweetness of His Heart,

whose expression waited upon creature-need. God created us that He might share His bliss with us ; and our honour is the power and opportunity to fulfil the lacking measures of His Love.

To a child I should say, God aches because He is so happy. He is giving and getting all the time, and He longs to give without return. Or, let me say, He longs to suffer while His return is pending, even if it be an age and ages of ages ; and, when it comes, to find it less than He has given. He longs to give whole heavens more than it is possible He can receive, and to give again still more to make that poor requital possible. He longs to stoop, to cherish, to forgive ; to rescue, to shield, to lead to victory ; and, mystery of mysteries, to pay, for a little trustful clinging of miserable things, the price of suffering.

And it was to secure this inevitable determination of His own Goodness—this giving which crowns the living of all love, and is known to the experience of every heart that lives by love—that the Trinal Unity took counsel and said, " Let Us make Man." It was for this that God externalised Himself in that act we call creation ; put out His thoughts and said to them, " Become." Not by God's will, not by God's devising, but out of the very lavishness of His gift, this act involved the dread condition which enabled the expression of His selflessness. From the instant of creation God's Spikenard sent forth its fragrance.

Why then, if God neither transmitted, nor planned, nor willed it, must evil, by the very fact of creation,

arise in the creature? Is not this Manichæism? Not at all, when understood. Creation involved the independent will of the thing created. If God's desire was to save and protect His creature, it must need Him; if it was to need Him, it must stray from Him; if it should stray, it must be free.

If He was to teach and train it to love Him, it must have a heart to give. In no puppet or automaton could His love find either scope or return. Generating "sons," God must apportion to them a share in His own sovereign prerogative, the power of choice. So doing, He bound His hands. From that moment, happen what might, He pledged Himself to respect this freedom. Indeed, He abdicated the power to do otherwise. Let those petulant souls take note who ask, Why did not God stop the War?

Thus at once a new thing arose. God ceased to be the only Agent. Free wills, little gods, armed with a portion of God's initiative but without His goodness, came upon the scene. That they should seek their own advantage was natural, for they had not God's Love; that they should seek it mistakenly was inevitable, for they had not God's Wisdom; that they should seek it in His despite was foregone, for they had a fragment of His Power.

Such an experiment was foredoomed to disaster; not by any evil inherent in the creature, for he was a son of God, but by the sheer fact of his heritage of independence undirected and untaught. The Royal Heir he was; but what blood or birthright, however noble, safeguards a child let loose in a powder-magazine?

From henceforth God, so far as these new wills were concerned, was God no longer. He could never force this Frankenstein-monster of free-will. He must abide by His gift. Only moral power was left Him. The new experiment was a resignation of His absolutism and a single challenge to His Love. He could guide, overrule, avert ; He could woo, threaten, persuade, cherish, punish, and reward ; He could kill : but He could never coerce. A child had come upon the scene with a will like God's, without God's directivity of character ; a will that could die defying Him, free to play with fire, to grow up and blast His Cosmos—that I should not say, to break His Heart.

And God knew this, and abode by the price. So great was this περίσσευμα,[1] by which the love of God "abounded towards us" ; so imperfect was the perfection of the Love-Feast of the Deity ; so did the extravagance of Love overflow the boundaries of heaven : that with deliberate purpose He determined to give this hostage of His Heart.

For He knew what would be in the end. He looked into the Contingency created by creating, and saw Pain, Evil, and Sin ; and all was still very good. For He saw beyond. He saw His Wisdom justified of her children, His Power vindicated, His Love triumphant and at rest. All the sorrow and sin and death was worth the risking, that "counting not His Godhead a prize to be clutched at," He might take upon Him the form of a servant and die for His redeemed.

For He saw the issue. He saw the white-robed

[1] Rom. v 15 ; Eph. i 8.

Bride of His Heart, confessing her innumerable love ; He saw the travail of His Soul, and was satisfied. In the wise and just scales of His judgment He weighed a groaning and travailing creation against the joy of one saint's head upon His breast ; and the price went up light, kicked the beam. "Generous at His creatures' expense," do we say ? What do we know of values ? What of our own advantage—or of indemnities laid up by Justice for the subjects of the experiment of Love ?

And indeed He has, in regard of murmuring, silenced us for ever. Had He laid a cross upon His creatures which He Himself disdained or feared to touch, our count against Him might be just. But He has Himself plumbed the lowest profoundity of our misery. Not only has He crowned His enterprise to our eternal gain, but He has so much more than shared its costs with us, that His martyrs in all ages, contemplating His Passion, have deemed their deaths for Him an augment of their debt.

It grows clear, I think, the meaning of those words, "The Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world." The fiat of Creation was the decree of Calvary. They used to discuss the problem whether the Word would have become Incarnate if man had not fallen ; the question does not arise, for law is the strength of sin. To man, with the brute in his blood, backed with the entail of the long and selfish struggle for survival, the crisis of moral choice was the signal for backsliding. "Adam," the spiritual will, was free ; but "Eve," the animal soul, was the slave of her ancestry. Man's

fall, whatever it may have been, did but materialise a need created by creation : the need of the Cross.

The world's history is but a moment of God's foreknowing magnified, as when the cinema-wheel is slowed and we see into the womb of time. The death of Christ was more than the focus of evolution ; it was the goal of Cosmos. A free animal was as sure to crucify God as he had been to flout His commandment. The one is the logical terminus of the other. This is no paradox. There is no " fate " but the seed of effect in cause. Man's will is free ; but the very fact of his freedom was the cause from which his error sprang.

Bergson, I fear, when he denies creative evolution to be foreknowable (assuming that he admits a Personal First Cause) makes time an absolute. I believe that with God the difference between a moment and eternity is as purely a matter of voluntary focussing of His Consciousness, as the limit of my vision from a hill-top is determined by the point on which I fix my eyes. I believe that He lies along time as He extends through space ; that when He sent out the stream of Becoming, He was present at its delta, and saw it tumbling into that sea which is Himself. " Becoming " is free where wills are free ; but there is no " foreknowing " in the matter. It is not that God is a prophet ; it is simply that His consciousness is co-extensive with eternity. " I am Alpha and Omega " ; " I am the First, and with the last." Or, simply, " I AM."

This, I repeat, no more " predestines " our doings and beings, or relieves us of responsibility, than it

destroys the merit of Christ's love in dying for us. Absolutely we do create our actions. If they are begotten upon us by our environment, we have first given consent. We do create our actions, when they are more than reactions to our passions ; and these are only our own older children.

Wilfully we weave our wills into the net of cause-effect. The only fetter upon our freedom is the past, which we have forged ; we drag it after us like a chain, and every link we add to it materialises, with a grim irony, the " Kismet " we naïvely plead. We are free enough to be responsible ; and if we are not free, we are answerable for our non-freedom.

For we can, if we choose, be free, because the Cross offers us perfect freedom—which is obedient sympathy with the all-conquering Will of Love

V

God's Mystical Marriage

Here then, arising automatically, not from any malice or bungle on God's part, but from the sheer independence of the creature, was the "felix culpa," the condition under which alone He could fulfil Himself as Holocaust of Love.

For if His Justice were infringed, the culprit's life must satisfy. Yet it could not satisfy, being a life not pure. What life, then, was pure, but His own? And how could God give His Life for or in the culprit, or at all—unless He make the culprit's life His own; and, dying its death (for His own Life could not die), at once satisfy His Justice and consummate His Love? And how could Love thus atone to Justice, if God were Unipersonal?

Thus the Tri-Une "paradox" is discovered to be the ground, not only of our existence, but of our hope. That Social Unity, which makes God's Being possible, reveals itself as the sphere of His Expression. Apart from it, He could not have created. How could the irrelate produce relation? Apart from it, He could not have redeemed and sanctified. How could a Person become a medium to himself? "A mediator is not a mediator of one; yet God is One!" Co-operative actions

argue a Comity of Persons ; this, where Deity is in question, requires Unity of Substance. In the Cross we see not only the seal of Creation, but the triple signature of the Council of the Eternal.

Now it was necessary that the Agonist of the great Renunciation should be the Word. For the Father is the Source Absolute of Godhead, dwelling inscrutably behind phenomena, inapprehensible, unrelatable, but through His Sole-Begotten Son. The Father, the Subject Inconceivable, can only be named ; the Son is the Object, the Expression, the Reflection, through Whom He is reflected into consciousness and realised in act.

By the Word, as by a Hand, and by the Spirit, as by a moulding Finger, the Absolute wrought in creation ; by the Word and through the Spirit, the drink-offering of love must be poured out upon the created thing. By the Word, Deity put forth the cloud of thought that determined in matter and mind, and incurred the lost distress that gave scope for tending ; by the Word He "emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death."

When the time was come, Love, in the Person of the Word, descended into Its arena. See, by a careful understanding of His purpose, how He qualified Himself to attain it. Bethlehem and Calvary, in one light, answer each to each. It was written that He, being God, must for man's sin, to God, make entire amends of death. To this end He must identify Himself, in no figure but in fact, with the creatures He was to redeem.

No self-disguise of human semblance would secure this aim. No halving, compromise, or fusion of His nature with ours would avail ; for he that would mediate between two must be wholly each and jointly both. Nor would it serve for Him to descend into an existing man and possess him ; for such a product would neither be one nor pure, nor represent his brethren. And, even were it not absurd that He could be "changed into" a man, such a monstrosity would be neither human nor Divine.

All these errors about the Incarnation have been made by crudely-thinking men, and in the Church's Creeds are crucified with Christ. Her truth is mystery, as when she taught of Three in One, but clear and inexpugnable : a light for soul and heart, and a rock to build on. The Word neither feigned flesh nor fused with it, but put it on ; neither inspired an individual, nor became a human person, nor two persons human and divine ; but assumed Human Nature.

I cannot define, though I "know," what personality is ; nor can I tell, though I can intuitively see by faith, how impersonal human nature can be put on by God. But I know that the key to the Victim is the Sacrifice ; and that no other theory of the Flesh-Taking projects, for my intelligence, any rational light upon the Cross. If the human race is to be atoned to God through a medium, such medium must be, not a human person, but a God-appropriated human Principle, in which human men and women, minded to benefit by such atonement, can partake and inhere.

Such a Principle the Word became. He "took our nature upon Him." To the created Body and Soul of the Virgin Mary's seed and substance, in which the Creator Spirit clothed Him, He, Very God, supplied the place of Personality, so that "human being" became part of the Second Person of God.

In that Body and Soul, that impersonal Human Nature of the Word Divine, "Human Being" was offered on the Cross for sin. With that Human Nature, perfected by complete obedience to the will of God and quickened out of death which could not hold pure Life, human persons are united in new birth by faith, charity, and obedience—and so are immortally united with God. As in Adam's loins all men partook of sin and death, so spiritually in the Heart of that new Adam all, whom the Father draws, are gathered into the Eternal Life.

Thus Love, as in heaven, so on earth and again in heaven, fulfils itself as the "Vis Conservatrix" of Life. Thus the glorious "extravagance" of the Love of God, which even with the Love of God was not content, finds expression and bears fruit. Well indeed may we call Christ's Cross His "Passion"; for assuredly most like to what we conceive as passion is this divine prodigality of sacrifice.

Our Mother, mindful of the riot of our anthropomorphism, schools us to think of our Father as "Impassible"; yet she is ever bursting with the admission that He is loving. Will she chide her loving children, if their childish instinct challenge the cold mien of Deity; if, in the "Passion" of the

Man Christ Jesus, we suspect the sign and sacrament of a burning Heart in God?

And this overflow of the Love of God is not poured out in vain. If one may so speak, it is continually enriching the Being of God. Every human heart in which the love of Christ is perfected feeds a Heart that hungers but to lavish, whose Allness is the measure of its noble need, and whose riches hold no lack, save that they are too much its own. Joined with God in a union so intimate and vital that Christ Himself could only veil it with His glowing utterance,[1] God's Saints become the life-flowers of the Trinity.

There is no creature come from God, or living by breath drawn from God, that does not live by growth. Seeing, then, that God is All-Pattern and All-Cause, it is not too bold to seek some answer to the idea of growth in God. This, then, is the extension of the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ. It cannot be that the perfect should be made more perfect but as a tree is made richer by the clusters of its own fruit. God took a human Heart to compass and realise His own desire for us; and they that are gathered therein are "as the stones of a crown" and "as a jewelled robe adorning His Majesty for ever."

We are now moving, as the cleared way opens before us, towards a new phase of our theme. Till now we have scarcely greeted it from afar, perhaps because it is so earthly, perhaps because it is so heavenly.

[1] St. John xvii 21–23.

As we contemplate the perfected union of Christ with the myriads of His Saints, we see the fulfilment of that catholic ideal of love which we found proposed in the Threeness of God's unity itself. "Ten thousand thousand are their tongues, but all their joys are one." There are sons and daughters of God from every race and time, and as they flock into the Paradise of Vision, white-robed from their purging, Love is proven as a fire that grows by kindling.

For them the welcoming Love discovers ever new profundities, affords to each and every of them no meaner guest-chamber than whole Heaven, so many mansions are there in the Father's house, which is the Heart of God. Flowering in such living organic unity with the Root and Stem of Love, their charity is blown, like pollen-dust, over all the many-hued garden of heaven, and carried far, far beyond into the most sterile fields of earth. Truly Christ is a Society, and the love that is the arterial ebb-and-flow of His Body knows no tidal limit—no, not in earth or heaven.

Yes, he who would make words about the "happie harbour of the Saints" gets lost in tropes and figures. Christ Himself inwove them, with kingly promiscuity, into His teaching as they served: "Body," "Vine," "Feast," "City," "Temple"; like dissolving views they passed into one another and into the common thought and speech of man, and all our childish pictures are of His designing. The canons against "mixed metaphor" were framed for lesser themes. I do but try to show that, as God is Three, so in Christ there is no dual limit, no

privy mutual favour, no binding down of love with any selected soul ; in that Heavenly Feast,

> Sumit unus, sumunt mille ;
> Quantum isti, tantum illi,
> Nec sumptus consumitur.

But there is another aspect. The Church is called by her Lord—implicitly in the Parables of the Marriage-Feast and of the Virgins, and in plain words by John the Baptist before Him, and after Him by Paul and John the Mystic—" The Bride."

There could be no fitter image for the massed impartiality of the love of Christ for the innumerable multitude of His Saints. But a multitude is made up of units ; and Christ's Saints do not share Him, for He is the heart-whole Spouse of every one. " You are the Temple," " You are the Temples," " of the living God " ; " You are the Body of Christ, and members in particular."

What is the Body of Christ ? It is a prism, refracting in uncounted hues the creative love of God, and every colour is the peculiar virtue of one just man made perfect. Better (for Christ is not divided), it is a lens, turned every way, in each of whose myriad focal points, a whole image of the Sun, one soul flames and is not consumed. Thus the universality of Love reduces itself to a dual unit, and yet is not decreased one whit. " Christ and the Church," as we gaze, passes into " Christ and the Soul." And every single soul, set thus in Christ's Love, is called the " Bride " of Christ and of God.

Here, then, we meet with a figure of the Perfect Love, given from the mind of God Himself, which

bends our thoughts down for the first time from the ideal to its image in the earthly and the concrete. For the heavenly mystery of Redemption we are pointed to its image in the earthly mystery of Marriage.

If, therefore, Marriage be the ordained type of man's eternal life, we shall do well to look into it carefully, as into a mirror, showing things out of sight. Marriage, if its spiritual content be so sacred, must itself be a sacred thing, as the altar sanctifies the gift, the Host the shrine. So St. Paul, who when describing and prescribing it, breaks off suddenly and fearfully, "This Mystery is great! but I am speaking about Christ and the Church."

We must seek, then, the real meaning and directivity of Marriage; not only as a by-law of our natural commonweal, but as the signature of a heavenly Order and the answerable pledge of an eternal hope; not merely as the guarded gate of human posterity, but as the sacrament of a mysterious secret caught from God, whereby the Cosmos generates itself for ever.

VI

Man's Typical Marriage

And before we thus consider Marriage as a Type, we have to get a clear understanding of what a Type is, and of its relation to its "Antitype." For we have small space for a stupendous theme ; we have to pass on and see that human Love and Marriage are, like all true types, more than a type ; that they are a stage in the unfolding manifestation of a divine principle, which has descended into matter and is struggling upward towards reunion with its Source.

Of all types, I say, this is true. All are materialisations of some spiritual thing rising out of flesh, which at each phase takes forms ever richer and more translucent to its beauty. So pure love between man and woman is more than merely a foreshadowing of the Union Mystical ; it is an actual flowering of the incarnate principle of Love itself, sown in protoplasmic clay and ripening to its fruit-time.

It is the pleasure or the pose of many to see in human love nothing more than a golden spur of nature to her ends, as though they knew her "ends." Their moral ideals may be excused by the limits of their vision ; supposing, indeed, that the veil is upon the eyes, and not upon the heart ; for we are told of the pure in heart, that they shall see.

To penetrate the disguise of love upon its dolorous way of human profanation, to descry its unearthly beauty beneath the lurid robe of self and the acanthus-crown of shame, is to discover a new sense of its divinity and a deepened veneration for its holy laws.

For, indeed, love is a messiah, an avatar of God, and moves ever onward to its Perfecting, and its wondrous transfiguration in man's day is to the wise a sign ; in the revelation of the Incarnate Love, it has found its own. Blessed are they who, meeting it upon its way and blest by it, are conscious of its sanctity ; who tend its wounds and tears, and offer it the reparation of their reverent service : they shall receive, like Veronica, its image upon their souls.

We mend our pace too eagerly. Let us be content, for the moment, to consider Marriage as a Type. What is a type ? It is a stamp, or impress, "struck" upon the surface of material being. If that be so, the thing that "strikes" the image must be the real, paramount, original, enduring thing. It must be, both in nature and in order, primary to its "character" or impress.

This is a law of the first importance, which governs (as Swedenborg well saw) the relation between the worlds. It unifies, in fact, the spiritual and the material creations. It must, therefore, be set well to heart by all who would make search into ultimate truth, or even in this world walk seeingly. It is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is the gospel of the law of Correspondence. The forms and functions, which in this world answer to

heavenly realities, are "Figures of the True": ὑποδείγματα, "under-shows," of the real and the abiding.

Nor is this so hard to understand, when we realise that all phenomena are "made of things which do not appear"; that all our "things" are but invisible, impalpable forces, translated into sense-perception by incessant motivity and change. Spiritual principles are creative; they reach us by "materialising" in forms and facts cognisable to our senses of flesh. All material things are sacramental, not merely until seven times, but unto myriad-fold seventy times seven; and all physical experience is but the algebra of the eternal.

A Type is a conception with which we were made familiar in our early childhood, and whose modern obsolescence is responsible for quite the bulk of our modern theological chaos. For types are the ordained object-lessons of that school of divinity which is God's world. We learned eternal truths (if we were not child-victims of that doltish and most myopic educational stupidity, which in these days forbids little children to come to God) through pictures of story. Most of these stories are now discounted, because the cleverness which makes no trouble about proving a negation has discovered that the things related in the stories never happened; and the said genius thinks it has thus destroyed the educational value of the said stories as lessons of the Truth.

We learned about our Lord Jesus Christ, then, through persons in the Old Testament who were, and fared, and acted, like Him; who did in a small

and material way what He did in a great and spiritual way when He came. We saw, in Isaac climbing Mount Moriah with the wood, Christ going up Calvary hill with His cross ; in the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea, Christ's Church passing to heaven through the tide of His Blood.

And, as the type always came first and the antitype afterwards, we came to think of the Type as the original, and of the Antitype as the afterthought. A Type, we said, is a rough sketch, given us before the real thing is completed, like a plan of a building : the building itself is not yet ready, but the plan is shown us that we may know what it is going to be like when it is put up.

This idea of a type is perfectly right, when we look at it after the earthly order. But, seen in the heavenly order, it is lamentably short of the truth. In the temporal sense, the type is first and the reality second ; the reality does not yet, for us, exist ; even the idea of it is as yet approximate and conjectural. In the eternal sense, the Reality is first.

" He that cometh after me, is preferred before me ; for He was before me." In the language of Apocalyptic, the person or principle that is destined to come is heard *behind* the Seer, the conception being that it is about to come past and emerge in front of him.[1] For the Reality is Eternal. It existed all the time ; and the Type is only the shadow, or rather the materialised image of it, thrown on the physical plane.

We have this principle taught us by our Lord,

[1] Rev. i 10.

when the Jews said to Him, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?" and He answered, "Truly, truly I tell you, Before Abraham was, I AM." Abraham was a type of Christ, and, as such, he was seen first; but Christ, the I AM, was from eternity; and His unveiling was foresensed in and by Abraham. A temporal fact exists in time, and for a moment; its spiritual original exists from eternity to eternity, and was from the beginning fixed and complete.

So, in St. John's Gospel, our Lord says, "Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world"; and St. Paul says, "God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world"; and in the Apocalypse we read that the names of the elect were written in the Book of Life "from before the foundation of the world," and even this, that "the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world."

Again, St. Matthew adapts Psalm lxxviii 2: "I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world." And the Author to the Hebrews gives the key, speaking of the preparations for the "Rest" of the People of God, "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." The spiritual things were always "finished," but they were "hidden"; hence the need of types to reveal and forecast them.

We gather this about type and antitype, then: that the antitype is first, the type is only revealed first. The type is not a mere anticipation of the Reality; it is a generated embodiment of it. The word Antitype is therefore insufficient and

misleading. Archetype is the word. The idea does not dawn in the type and develop into the reality ; the type is the visionary glimpse, through the glass of phenomena, of the Reality reserved.

It is as if, being a father, I have invested ten thousand pounds for my child. I may often show him the certificate—which is a type of the possession of the money—and explain about it to him ; but the money is there all the time, though he cannot realise it as his own possession until he comes of age. Nay, I may pay him periodically the interest accruing on the capital, to spend, which is a still better type of a type ; for is not the fruitful joy of pure earthly love the dividend and usufruct of that Love Divine, laid up in the Heart of God Himself, which the True Bridegroom "has prepared for them that love Him" ?

That Love-Feast is even now in being ; the echoes of that Epithalamium, to the Lamb's Wedding-guests elect, are faintly audible. Yet the mystic Agape is nearer to us all, the bounty of the royal Spouse is wider and more deeply vital to our common life, than many deem. For what, but crumbs from that Table, are the uplifting joys—and still more sacramental sorrows—of true wedded love ?

This matter of a Type, then, has to be clearly understood, before we enter upon the theme of Marriage. For it is my standpoint absolute, that Marriage is sacred because it is the typic outcrop of a Principle Divine ; that this Principle is not a vague shadowy afterthought for pious people, who are understood to be poor fools, but the real thing

Marriage itself; the true, archetypal thing Marriage, of which our earthly marriage, beautiful and wonderful as it is in itself, is a temporary copy and foretaste.

In fact, that the real thing Marriage existed from all eternity, because it was, in fact and in being, from all eternity in God. Whereas human physico-psychical marriage is the ὑπόδειγμα or submonstration of it, which has here developed in the form of an evolutional purpose, and gives scope for the noblest and most beautiful of human powers and passions; but which is really a root put forth from an infinitely greater thing, whose unfolding glory it exists to image and to serve, and into whose eternal substance it shall pass when all days are done.

For you are not to suppose that, because a thing is unseen, it is vague; or that, because it is long quiescent, it is powerless or unavenging; or that "mystical" means unreal. The precise opposite is the truth. Types are not sentimental afterthoughts, chosen anyhow because they happen to be like the reality, as I cast about for illustrations in my conference with you. They were made originally on the pattern of the Reality, and out of its essence; and they depend from it, witness to it, and serve it.

We have this in the making of the Tabernacle: "See," said God, "that thou make all things after the Pattern shown to thee in the Mount." And of the Temple: "David gave to Solomon the Pattern of all that he had by the spirit." For these material forms were cosmic object-lessons; they were designed to teach the wise concerning the sin-riven Spiritual Universe, and the Priestly Function

whereby, at the end of ages, the Sanctuary of God should be opened, through the rent veil of sin, for man. It is as though God, ever spiritually creating, experimented with matter, and showed His models to man. "His Eyes are upon the pattern of the vessel; and He will set His heart to perfecting His work." [1]

Or let us take, as a supreme example, the Bread of the Eucharist. We know that it is much more than a type; it is the Body of Christ. But of course it is a type too, for in its whole nature and constructive history it is like That of which it is the vehicle. Yet we are not to think that, on the night of His last day, Christ looked about for something that resembled His Body, and chose it as a sign. Bread had always done that, because it was itself originally modelled on His Body, which is an eternal spiritual Fact. Bread, together with the whole idea of its making, was created on the lines and after the idea of the Body Christ should take; not merely for man's food, but to teach him that he should not live by bread alone, but hope for a Food transcending it to heavenly life.

Indeed, it is true that the primary purpose for which bread was given to man was that it might be the earnest, and at last the symbol and the vehicle and pledge, of the Body of Christ. It was God's Thought materialising itself in the likeness of that Body, both in Its physical and spiritual aspects. The "corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, and bringing forth much fruit"; the first-ripe sheaf cut down and bound; the corn threshed,

[1] Ecclus. xxxviii 28.

ground in the mill of suffering, baked in the furnace of death, made into Bread for Food of Life : we need hardly study the ceremonial of the Jewish Harvest Festivals to discover the purport of all this. It was that, when the process of our spiritual Harvest should unfold itself, man might have some familiar thing to compare it with, and so greet it with the knowledge which is joy.

And these, the Sacraments, are notable "copies and shadows of heavenly things." But for those whose eyes are open, the eternal verities are for ever mirroring themselves in the shallows of our changeful matter-stream. All down the ladder of being the law of correspondence manifests, kingdom upon lower kingdom stamps its likeness ; the fern is imaged in the rime-crystal, the bee in the orchid, the butterfly in the leaf, in the passion-flower the emblems of our Redemption ; he that hath eyes and ears, to him many things witness to greater things, and all things to the presence of the Enduring.

O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee !

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars ;
The rush of pinions, could we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

As the thoughts of the mother find expression in the very body of the child, so in temporal things are set the birthmarks of that real world, from which all things come, and to which all true things return. "Here is the mind that hath wisdom"—ask of the poet and the seer; for the two are one. But there are a few of these materialisations of the unseen, which a teaching Church, the prophet of the Holy Ghost, has marked and, as it were, "electrified" for us; she has chosen them as pure conductors, charged them with her mediatorial power, and called them Sacraments—and one of them is Marriage.

We have been taught that Marriage "signifies to us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church." But when we hear of this, we are not to think of this marriage as just a chance resemblance to that; nor of that Marriage as a vague future corollary upon this; but of the earthly marriage as a mark or character, stamped, by the Heavenly Marriage, on the earthly plane. And not so in the case of Catholic Christians merely, as though the sentiment of religion must needs be fathered by fanatical extremists upon every common phase of life; but intrinsically as in itself; as much and as truly so in the case of the careless who do not know, as of the favoured few who know and lay to heart. Judged, we may be, according to our light; facts are not altered by our darkness.

We are to think of the earthly love as the heavenly Love descending into matter and soul; of the whole relation of male and female—from its blind dawn in the union of the crudest cell-pair, through the whole evolving history of sex to the romance of a

Dante and a Beatrice, fruitful and unfruitful, noble or sordid—as a heaven-born thing. We are to look on love, from first to last, as a pulse or rhythm, set by the heart of God, to which life moves ; a power or quality proper to His own Life and beating out its Immortality—and therefore inherent in that creative Breath, which He "made subject to the vanity" of matter ; that this too should not die. The whole "event to which creation moves" is the perfect Duality which is the unit of a perfect Society, the union between God and soul. And this law, being the rationale and the destiny of life, is woven into its warp and intrinsic to its substance.

And the mystery is deeper yet. We have said that the archetype of Marriage is in God Himself. Created life is male and female. To peer, for paradigms of mortal being, into the Light Invisible, demands indeed the spirits of true godliness and holy fear. Yet all clues to truth, vouchsafed us by the Spirit, are our own to follow ; and there are a few half-lights in Holy Writ which give us all we need or ask to know.

If we cast back our thoughts to the story of Creation, we find that "God created man in His own Image ; male and female created He them." We know that sex is a mere episode in created life ; that it was not so at the beginning, that it will not be so in the End. Yet sex is the materialisation of a dual aspect or principle, eternally inherent in Life. And the inference from the words of Genesis is that the Pattern of this principle, in some mysterious sense, exists in the Source of all.

To those who are alive to the undertones of Scripture (and few others shall go far in heavenly learning) there are strange hints of a beautiful and tender Motherhood in God. We have already touched upon them : the Spirit brooding like a mother-bird over Chaos ; the strange expressions about God's care of Israel, how " He bare them, and carried them all the days of old," " bare them upon eagles' wings, and brought them to Himself " ; the mysterious female personification of the Word in the Wisdom books ; the tender lament of our Lord over Jerusalem, in which He likens Himself to " a hen gathering her chickens under her wings."

There is an order of mind that would find presumption or indecorum in such paths of thought ; it is easy to confound reverence with the agnosticism of mental sloth. Whence should the great and wonderful polarity arise, if not from the First Cause of all ? Wonderful relation of Subject and Object ; wonderful consistence in resistance ; wonderful unity in differentiation, regeneration in union : whither should we trace love's vital covenant, but to Him in Whom we first found Love ?

I ask pardon if I repeat myself ; but it is true to recognise in God, in effect, a Life-Unity expressed in Two, from Whose union a Third proceeding restores and seals that Unity for ever. The ana-katabolic rhythm, whose pulse is the heart-beat of Immortality : is it not one in earth and heaven ?

Often is the mystic conscious, with awe and yearning, of a Motherhood in God. One does not

teach the thought to children and simple folk; indeed, it is scarcely an explicit thought at all. Yet children, and the childlike, are they who stretch out subconscious arms to it; for among children there are many quiet mystics, and he can never be a mystic who is not a child. Grand and strong and sweet is the thought of a Father; there are times and moods and modes in which the soul cries for a Mother.

There is no opposition in the thoughts; is there any on earth? It is the mute witness of the parent-duad to its oneness, the father seeking to the mother in the heart of the child. We have no open revelation of the Motherhood in God; it would not be good for us, we could not be trusted with its delicacy, its tender and reserved mysticity. It whispers itself in the loving heart, which is the only seer, and will steal all secrets in its day. And this is why the Church, in her thoughtful wisdom, has given us Mary.

God has adorned His Bride, His Church, with the peculiar jewels of His tenderness, and named her "Jerusalem, the Lamb's Wife." To her, expressing the Covenant-Principle made fertile by the Incarnate Word, the Woman Sun-clothed, Moon-throned, Star-crowned, He has bidden us "come bending, and bow down at the soles of Her feet."[1] (It is a standing marvel to me that any lover of the "Open Bible," in the face of such language about the Church, can boggle at the veneration and invocation of God's Blessed Ones.

[1] Isaiah lx 14.

The Bible is as well shut as open, if we will not read and mark it.)

And the Church in her modesty, not yet being perfect, has taken of this raiment of needlework and wrought gold, which He cast upon her, and arrayed Mary with it ; charging Her, whom He knows as Mother, to gather her children to her heart and cherish them with those tender graces, which she has drawn from Him and so singularly embodied, and which are, originally and ultimately, His alone. " Take this child, and nurse it for me," said Pharaoh's daughter to Jochebed ; and she turned out to be the real mother !

To find, in one Divine Being, Father and Mother, would have been difficult for man. There is a certain polarity between sternness and sweetness, strength and tenderness ; they are in ourselves so scarcely reconciled, that it would seem for many a conceptual effort to marry them in God. In the different temperamental pictures of God which men carry in their minds, as in the conceptions of Christ's Face, there is often disproportion between the Justice and the Mercy ; we must make Him this, or that : and often too implacably the one, or too indulgently the other.

And though, if once we think, we know that God is infinite strength and love in perfect union, there are times when we feel a wistful need to make a sort of appeal from His greatness to His kindness, to set, as it were, the one against the other ; as a child, naughty and yet sorry and loving, might fly to its mother's arms and crave its mother's plea, just because it is yearning for its father's kiss.

The thought is of our weakness, but not untrue or wrong ; indeed, in the earthly case, I think that at the soul of it there lies an act of faith in the father's love for the mother—and in that wholly right and final issue to the matter, which the equilibrium of their moral judgments must bring.

And that perhaps is why those of us, whose love can afford to be in no panic about its theology, are allowed to think of Mary as the Mother-heart, though we know that the source of all her sweetness is the Sacred Heart she cherished in her flesh and in her soul ; His, Who blessed little children and caressed them, and wept yearning tears over His rebel brood in old Jerusalem, and pillowed a friend's head upon His Breast and was kind to outcast women with a love which shames their sisters, and was thronged on earth with the faithful love of women who could find in Him, the Master and the Brother, all the answer of all the graces of all womanhood made perfect ; and now lives to plead with His own Justice, Motherlike, for sinners : that "Pious Pelican" Who feeds us from His Breast, Jesus our Lord.

For what is Mary, but an abstraction of love from Love ; an essence, drawn from the Human Heart of God, of its abounding human fondness and pity ? If she be an ideal, she is no less a living, pleading person. The intuition of all climes and ages seeks and feels for God as Mother ; the conceptions of Isis, Astarte, of the many-breasted Ephesian Artemis, all are crude creations of this instinct of the upward-struggling soul of man,

which is prophetic because divine ; and all are answered in her whom a poet called,

> Sweet Stem of that Rose Christ, which from the earth
> Sucks our poor prayers, conveying them to Him.[1]

Our love for Mary no more derogates from Christ's Divine or Human absoluteness than the casket robs the jewel or the hearth the flame. He is of her substance ; what is she but what she is of Him ? She is the soft halo of His love and the penumbra of His glory ; when we gather into the tender moon-like sheen of her protection, we are not far from the Photosphere ; when we are drawn into her orbit, we circle the Sun of Life ; for she exists but to magnify the Lord.

His Mother, and therefore ours, is she ; and, seeing that mystically her gracious figure passes over into that of the Bride whose fairest jewel she is, all Christians witting or unwitting are her clients and children ; for Heavenly Sion is "the Mother of us all."

[1] Francis Thompson, *Sister Songs*.

VII

The Sanctity of the Type

We have seen that Love and Marriage find in God their Pattern and their Goal ; that the relation of sex, which makes life in creatures racially immortal, answers dimly to that all-holy and mysterious Love, which is the very name of God, and by which His Life consists and abides eternal.

This pulsing heart in life, this active and reactive principle which in all stages of its ascent in creatures we may generically call love, can only grow and manifest with life, because it is part of life. Through the ages of evolution love has served its vital end in the disguise of an appetition of the flesh.

With life's emergence into reasonable soul, love dares to let something of his beauty shine through the carnal veil. Unchanged, his servile ministry to life, for life herself is in durance still. But the august captive, life, has won to the outposts of the domain of death, and begins to put on her royal robes, for she is near to deliverance. And so love also, her faithful body-servant, accoutres himself as befits the courier of a queen, that he may attend her through the gates when the time of her Ransom shall come.

And the interpretation is this : that to us men and women, who are the perfection of physical life,

love has at last revealed himself as something much more beautiful than a mere desire of flesh. We know love—if we have a soul-sense for its glory—not only as life's redeemer from bodily death, but as the most godlike quickener and paraclete of natural soul ; a redeemer of the heart, a holy spirit, a teacher and inspirer of all things tender, selfless, strong, and faithful.

What does this mean ? It means that life itself, in man, has reached that curve in its tremendous cycle where Christ stands to lead it back to God. It means that life, this son of God, has touched at last the outstretched hand of God's Eternal Son ; and that love, the life of life, is gathering glory for its transfiguration as the sacrament of a new and transcendent Immortality.

It is the day of the assumption of love human into Love Divine. Love, in its ripened but still earthly beauty, lies ready upon the altar, waiting the shaft of heavenly fire. From the ashes of its fleshly self, purged of all the prides and passions that still hamper and degrade it here, it shall rise and pass to its ascension, glorified with the glory which it had with its Father before the world was.

Eternal courier of eternal life, it shall no more beat onward through a strange country, threading the devices of death ; for its Redeemer died, and is alive for evermore—nay, it is taken up into Him, He is revealed as its Substance, it has appeared that He, after all, is Love.

We men and women, then, seeing we are experiencing love's resurrection, ought to perceive its

sanctity. Its great secret is out ; it comes from God and goes to God. The Very Love has come to meet it ; the Bridegroom has assumed it like a robe. Think of the descent of Love into love ; it is mystically the story of the Incarnation. Think how, in this day of Spousals, the Love between the Father and the Word has unfolded and devolved in the love between Christ and His Church ; how the Word has married human nature in the Incarnation, and still more wonderfully in Redemption ; how in Christ, God and the soul, though twain, are one Flesh.

Think, then, how the creature-love has striven and climbed to meet and touch this Love ; how the Divine Love waited for the fullness of the earth-love's power and beauty ; how never, till life had learned to fathom by experience the exquisite ideas of " wife " and " husband," did God from above reveal Himself to life as Bridegroom ; how not only by the laver of Christ's Blood and the white garment of His righteousness, but by the slow discovery of " marriage," was the Bride-elect " prepared and adorned " for her Husband.

Most clearly, then, the true love of man and woman is the very stretching-forth of the hands of life to God : the meeting-point of earth and heaven. What wonder if this earthly Bethel be anointed, though itself be but the vision of a night ; if human Marriage be fenced with power, and named a Sacrament ?

For true love is indeed a " House of God " and a " Gate of Heaven " ; and though it be but a brief dream from which we wake to mourning, yet we

never forget the vision of the ladder of glory, stretching up into the very Soul of God. In Christ Marriage discovers itself, by a direct scale of relations, a principle by origin and destiny Divine. Nothing else expresses that vitally intimate relation of the soul with Christ, which, as He was never weary of telling us, is identical with His own relation to His Father. "I am in My Father, you in Me"; "You shall abide in My love, even as I abide in My Father's love"; "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you"; "To him that overcometh will I give to sit down with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne." And to His Father, thus: "That they all may be One [thing]; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One [thing] in Us."

It would be impossible to express equation—and more than equation, a parallel which passes over into oneness—more vividly, more passionately, than in such words. When we realise that the Divine Wedlock is thus actually extended in the Mystical, which in turn is shrined and mirrored in the Sacramental, then the tremendous metaphysic of Marriage comes into light. We know that we are on holy ground. He who sees shall wonder, and he who reveres shall see; for reverence is the vision of the heart.

To the eyes that look at Marriage from below, it is not given to see Marriage as it is. For men and women naturally pure and true it may flower with beauty, open a new world of joy; without

the Master-Key they miss its soul, and the very vision they have caught is but the penumbra of a Light eclipsed.

Whatsoever in human love was pure and good before the Christ, was the sign and prelude of the regeneration He should bring. All in all Christian ages that is loveliest and best between man and woman, has issued from a few words and acts of Him—indeed from the very presence of His Spirit in the world—Who came to teach that woman is human and divine, and the fleshly bond a pledge of union before God inviolable. This is not all He taught, nor all there is to know; but it is much, and like a new and fragrant air it has transformed the world.

All true love has Christ to thank, because Christ unveiled in woman that image of God, which man and woman, being animals, degraded in irresponsible unknowing. And the woman who, in act or word, uses her great franchise to slight and deny its Giver; who at His Mouth knows herself the personification of human soul and the wardress of the mystery of life, and profanes her glory: she is the queen of ingrates; chattel-souled, she is a hark-back to the days of chattel-women.

From Christ we have learned at last that woman is man's peer and sister-soul; that in honourable right and faithful mutual duty, her man is hers, she his; that their union, by social bond and natural seal, is a psychic and physical fact irreversible and indissoluble. This law, heralded by love and proclaimed by God, all we men and women have at heart to shame us. Such public pretence as we

preserve attests its honour in the conscience of civilised humanity ; our private zest in flouting it proclaims it graven upon our hearts.

It may be that—when by some strong wind of judgment God shall have blown away the spiritual fog of present days—we shall get back our vision of that biological truth which alone can unteach this phase of sins and follies : that lesson new and old, that Marriage is a primary function of organic life, reflected and empowered from the creating and sustaining Life, and by vital law directed to our proper end in Him ; and withal, for its right conduct and discharge, dependent upon His blessing and therefore made a special channel of His grace.

That, in fact, Marriage is a Sacrament ; which is an act of man made like to an act of God, and set to witness and convey it to the soul and body. And sacraments, in a wider sense, are sacraments even without the user's ken or heed ; as water and bread and wine are in themselves sacraments, and were always so, though their sacramental profit waited on revelation and faith. From the beginning the natural things were channels ; but they were dry and ineffective, until Christ unsealed the sluices of His grace and flooded the thirsting fields ; and with each new pledge of mystic power He called mankind to some new moral and spiritual effort needing it, and marking a new stage of progress in the evolution He is come to crown.

And the effort to which the Sacrament of Marriage answers is, perhaps, the most arduous of all. What greater proof of the difficult ideal of beautiful and gracious wedded life, and of the need

of supernatural aid to live it, than the horrible alternatives of married misery and sin and ruin, preferred by men and women to the yoke of Christ? I wonder how, adventuring that state whose mould is God's Life and Christ's Espousals, shall prayerless men and women assure themselves of that pure unselfish strength and wisdom, without which Wedlock no more than any other bond is more than bondage, and which are God's to give? I wonder why, in leaders of men, that common statecraft, which we associate with Napoleon and Constantine and Mussolini, is so rare; that rudimentary psychologic common-sense, which perceives that religion is essential to the order and welfare of a State?

Marriage, seen from its earthward side, may indeed seem no more than a pragmatic thing; a mere contract of demand and supply, as much modifiable and terminable as any other agreement purely human. Let us frankly face the matter: the conception of marriage in present evidence—though much more in evidence than in prevalence, for the bad and foolish minority are by their nature noisy—is that of free love State-licensed. Let us not advertise the vulgarity, save to say that it is the perfectly logical result of looking at Marriage from below.

What else could we expect? From the material point of view, what else (provided we are to scrap quite frankly all the moral nobility of human soul, and return to honest clay) could we desire? Man is just a new and superior animal! Science, the new biped's expert Tigellinus, can put him wise to have his pleasure; with his pharmacopœia of devices,

prophylactic and eugenic, he can contrive to cultivate and feast the animal he is, and yet in health and wealth long to live. I see no reason why the ethic of his earthy state should greatly differ from that of the farmyard or the stud.

Between Christ and free love—save the last mark—there is no logical mean. A highly specialised Socialism; a Bureau of Sex-Science, to strike the highest common factor between pleasure and hygiene; to safeguard contract, of course; to regulate population; to farm the breed by stirpiculture; to secure by euthanasia, as with kittens, the survival of the fittest! Here is a perfectly conceivable and promising Utopia—God, of course, being left out of the reckoning. What has mere physical evolution to ask of God?

But when we view man as a candidate for spiritual survival, and our human development as life's maturity for reunion with God—indeed, even when we weigh the value of anything that can merit the name of real "happiness" here—our standpoint is changed. And when we perceive that Marriage is a God-taught sublimation of a necessary physical instinct, unveiling its divine content and hallowing it to the service of an eternal destiny; when we see in it the expression of a Divine Principle and a reflection of the mystery of our redemption from death: then we realise at once that this merely utilitarian view of Marriage is not only sacrilege but suicide.

For the pursuance of our evolution on the material plane it may answer perfectly; no doubt all the

physical and social objections, such as racial suicide, the wreck of family life, and the atrophy of the social virtues most conducive to an ideal State, can be overruled. Being neither biologist nor publicist, I offer no opinion on the matter.

But the question is of the Road that stretches before us. If the lines of human hope lie solely and for ever along the matter-plane, well and good. Let man feather his earthly nest, for to-morrow he dies. Though why that should be striven for or called attainment, which few at best can enjoy for a longer day than seventy years with declining health and rotting senses in the evening, is to me a riddle whose solution I have ever sought in vain.

On the other hand, if this supersessive herd-continuance be not all our hope, or be only the matrix and the mould of it; if we are called to individual immortality, and if my thesis of the conditions of this call be true: then this pragmatic theory of Marriage—if indeed it be pragmatic at all, and not the crown of anti-social stupidity—will not do. For to our progress after death it must put a dead stop. It is a defiance of the laws of the Kingdom above us and beyond us, and a mockery of their sanctity; a destruction of their action upon us, and an abortion of our service to them and of our interest in them; a misconception of a trust, a violation of its responsibility, and a forfeiture of its promise.

For faithful monogamy, the ideal which Christ disclosed and taught, has a fourfold service to man's eternal destiny. Its relation to the Kingdom of God is typical, anticipatory, conducive, and creative.

Typical, because of human soul, individual and corporate, God is the Husband. Anticipatory, because man and wife are to one another pledges of the eternal Love. Conducive, because marriage has a grace, qualifying the soul for Divine Union. Creative, because Christian wedlock is the natural foundry of new souls-elect for God.

These new values of Marriage are, I said advisedly, *disclosed by Christ* ; not invented or devised at this late day, because they are original and real entities, kept secret from the foundation of the world. Yet in organic Becoming this our law is new ; new even in the experience of man.

All along the development of species there has been, beyond the saving instinct of satiety, little sex-restriction at all. Polygamy and polyandry have been the order at every stage. Through the long dawn of man's own day, through civilisation after civilisation, save where Love struggled prematurely to be known, it was the same. The preponderance and weakness of the female, playing up to the power, sex-initiative, and selfish domination of the male, gave polygamy its charter in the world. How should it be otherwise ? It is the natural condition of the man-animal without God.

But when humanity was ready for heaven's ripening purpose, the Son of God came, and gave us an understanding. He announced to us that the time was now come for the life, which had germinated in the protozoon and was now flowering in man, to fruit, in Him, for God. And He unveiled, in view of this now open way for man, a new light, a new significance in common things

and uses fundamental to man's natural life. The significance was there from the beginning—for things material were never more than copies of real things—but it was now seen for the first time.

Do men wash their bodies with water? But water is the type, and shall now become the channel, of the cleansing and refreshing Life of the Word Who proceeds from out of God. Does man pardon his repentant enemy? man's word of forgiveness is the sign and means of the pardoning love of God in Christ. Does man devise means for the healing of his hurts and ills? the Unction of the Spirit is the pattern of the healing for body and soul. Have the corn and the grape, always and everywhere, formed the staple of man's nourishment? then the bread and wine, which he was wont to break and pour for his delight and for covenant of rejoicing with his friends, portended the new Eucharist of heavenly Sustenance and union with God and man.

Indeed, the whole body of man, perfected through the experimental ages, is a sacrament; for it is but the discovery of an eternal Image in a form of clay. "Let Us," said the Three-One, "make man in Our Likeness"; and in the end of the ages God claimed this Image by assuming it in the Incarnate, "from Whom all the Body, fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase to the upbuilding of itself in love."

Nay, there is not a phase in his common life, nor a function in his body or soul, that the seeing Christian cannot discover sanctified. In all his earthly being and doing there is not a point at which he may not know himself drawn up, through the

mysterious graces of correspondence, into the Incarnate Life of God. Seven Sacraments leap to light in the treasury of the Bride ; in the experience of the mystic you shall hear of seventy times seven.

And of this sex-union, hitherto but little more than a mechanical reaction ; inspired by appetite, selected by instinct, regulated by a natural ethic at best : His command went forth, " Thus far : a man shall cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh ; and whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery ; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

" He shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh " ; so God, when he first owned man as a moral being, read him his lesson before enforcing it. Long patient centuries He winked at our ignorance and hardness, against the day when, born amongst us in our image, He should reveal in us His own. To-day, no longer children, it is our wisdom to receive in an understanding heart His law, and by His grace bring forth its fruits to Life.

So, at the gate of the Kingdom, sex-union for the first time becomes Wedlock, discovers its heavenly Prototype, and is bidden into His likeness. And I cannot see (though God's mercy is great) how they who corrupt that sacred pledge, or cover it with mockery or shame, shall enter into the Divine Union ; for salvation is nothing other than an eternal Wedlock with God.

For those whose ambition is bounded by body's delight and death ; who have renounced that Goal, and are content to perish like the toiling, wallowing

beasts before them : let them in this matter be as their sires ; let them mate and unmate as lightly as they will, where will they find a Husband in the eternal night ?

But for those who have taken hold of Christ there is one law, one type, one conduct ; for they know that in His mind, Who bade them be " One flesh " with the yoke-mates of their love, they were themselves one flesh and spirit with His Sacred Humanity from before the beginning of the world.

VIII

The Moral Fallacy of Divorce

If you would see Marriage in the order proper to it, in its royal robes of glory, you must look upon the victorious Lamb of the Apocalypse, and the Bride arrayed in fine linen, white and clean, adorned for her Husband. Great John the Baptist, who came to demand the Bride's hand in Marriage, announced Him as the Bridegroom of the Church of God.

Think, then, of the inviolable sanctity, the eternal changeless faithfulness, of that union of the King with the whole Body of us, and with each soul that is the unit of the Body : "That they, and I, might be One Thing, O Father, in Thee—even as Thou and I are One Thing." Think of the inexpressible intimacy, the unbreakable unity, of that wedding and welding with God ; for in the emasculate Christianity of the day it is not taught, scarce known of, and the few weak voices raised in plea for Christian Marriage [1] miss, in missing it, their might and the making of their cause.

[1] The only body of Christians who uncompromisingly make stand for Christ in this matter, as in other matters, appears to be the Roman Catholic Church. "Anglo-Catholics" are her conscientious imitators in comparatively trifling things : why do they not emulate her campaign in defence of Christ's vital laws ?

Then think of its fair earthly image, made fetish for wanton fancy, honoured with dishonour, trodden into the fire of passion. Think of the shattered life-vow, sworn before the Shrine of the Eternal Husband, from which He feeds His own with His Flesh. Truly is the Spouse stripped of His own nuptial vestment, and arrayed in a robe of scorn.

Can you conceive of "Divorce" between Christ and His Saints? They have entered into Union, they are interfused, one Flesh: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"; how can such a blending be unmade, how alienated? To what, then, shall I liken the profaners of its earthly image, but to the Bride's antithesis—Babylon, the Harlot?

These are ultimate thoughts, apt to appeal, I may be told, only to the mystic. Men may not care for type and antitype, or any other of the interior ideals and mysticities of religion. It is not given to all faithful souls to see the King "in His Beauty." Yet spiritual laws, once revealed, are no more to be trifled with than physical; and men and women will find that the Nemesis which waits upon their spurning, if slow, is sure. Our great Religion lies deep, immersed in mortal things; the heavenly Life thrusts down its roots into our Order, planting its laws and principles among us and within us before the time of fruit.

In the mirror of our common experience, under the light of Christ's revealing, we get glimpses of a wonderful *continuum* between God and Cosmos—a simplicity and unity in the totality of things—putting to shame and rest the "problems" of our

unbelief. "How small the world is!" we say, amazed at some "coincidence"; learn of God, and you shall find that heaven and earth are one. As "in the beginning the Word was towards God and the Word was God," and the Spirit proceeded from Both, so, from the union of two, springs all the complex of our state on earth. As the high glory of the Church Triumphant is a multiple of Christ's fruitful troth with every soul, so is Marriage the unit of all that aggregate that is the state, the nation, and the race of men.

And as the impoverishment of the body's cells is the principle of death in the body, so from the disintegration of the Family there springs and spreads the dry-rot of the body politic. He and she who bring a child into the world have contracted a joint responsibility, not merely to the child, but to the comity of mankind. They have called the world to witness that they are as God; they have created a life and given it the right to a twofold guardianship, like God's Justice and Mercy. Should this child, lacking the protective and corrective guidance of a father or a mother's tender cherishing, grow up a model of that various virtue which is worthy of the human brotherhood, the sin of the broken vow will in nowise stand excused.

If the right of little living souls is to hang upon a caprice of the senses, a terminable pact of selfish passion; if the "innocent party's right of custody" may be shared with a succession of co-guardians likely, in the nature of the case, to resent the child's existence: then certainly, whatever polity may lie before us, I do not see it as a "Commonweal."

In such a leasehold of the first responsibilities of civilised existence, where, "Socialist," with your "extended facilities for divorce," is your common sense? Extended facilities for moth and rust! Where is your use of your material? The natural impulse of pride that comes with begetting, the new love that overblooms the memory of the mother's pain; the joy of linked creatures in each other's fruit: is it by unteaching these, that you husband your assets to a perfect State?

Where, I wonder, are your mighty men of counsel and valour to come from, your pillars of wisdom and righteousness, your country's defenders, your sons growing up as the young plants, and your daughters as the polished corners of any kind of temple? If the man and the woman be not faithful to their contract, how can they be aught but traitors to their child? And if the child be from its tender years an orphan and a derelict through its parents' selfishness, what sort of moral hope is there for it? And where, then, is your "Commune"? A commune of corruption! Yes, I said the "perfected State" could accommodate the maximum of licence with the minimum of loss; at what expense?

Only at that of love; which is the crucible of character, if any there be. Your "facilities for divorce and re-marriage" are facilities for the divorce of life from love, and for its re-marriage to self-love. In lifting from between man and woman true love's divine *noblesse oblige* of faithfulness, of mutual sacrifice and the self-discipline that reciprocity of service teaches, of all the mutual moral reflex of

the joint trust of parenthood, you are closing nature's finest school for the making, not merely of a citizen, but of a man or woman worth the name.

What sense of responsibility is inspired, what impulse given to self-review and the sustained effort of altruism, under a contract tacitly understood to be (by either party under the cloke of a detected treachery or by both under the villainous trick of a concerted one) terminable and transferable? Is this to be Society's endowment of the social virtues in which its coherence rests?

We are told that the social and commercial interrelations, which make the arterial life of human communities, are based on Credit; we hear much of England's Credit: what sort of credit is that, when the most vital of all compacts can be sworn and signed "with reservations"; when such words as "To keep thee only unto him," "Till death us do part," "I plight thee my troth" (my truth!) are reckoned (leaving out of court the challenged Trinity of God and His awful Name) not worth the paper they are written on, or the air their utterance cleaves?

Such words are capable, no doubt, of amendment —under the "Perfect State." While they stand, and with the gift of a golden ring's "eternal circle" are spoken—and broken, "Laws of Contract" and "Misdemeanour of Perjury" are ironies indeed. If the springs of human life, which human society has solemnly made confluent, can for a whim be diverted and defiled; if a licence to break an oath can be taken out at the cheap price of an act of broken faith: we have indeed a premium upon

probity. Truly "a man's word is as good as his bond"! As well exclude the word honour from our language and have done.

Naturally there are circumstances in which man and wife may be justified in living apart. Adultery, cruelty, refusal of peace, may be reasonable grounds of separation. Such questions are relative. It is not in my aim to open them, or to refine upon jurisdiction, ecclesiastical or civil. I know that, were I a woman, I would not hold myself bound to live indefinitely with sot or brute.

My point is that in Marriage—which in its bare essence is the promise, before witnesses and sealed with the act of union, of a man and a woman to keep faith with one another until the death of one of them—there is no Divorce. Divorce is "Diversion," a turning-asunder or disjunction, of two who have been irrevocably welded into one—leaving each free, by the nature of the case, to contract fresh union with another. This, in English law, is the meaning of the word. The definition will show that it is a contradiction in terms.

With Divorce, then, no faithful Christian, nor any disciple of that ideal of Marriage which Christ has recognised and raised, will have part or truck. Man and wife are one flesh. One flesh cannot be made two; nor can three persons be one flesh—unless they be father, mother, and child. Divorce is a violation of marriage; the fresh "union" of divorcer or divorced is a mockery of the Family—a blasphemous Trinity. Your mock three-in-one is a man, his disowned wife, and her licensed

paramour ; the real human trinity is Father, Mother, and Child.

Home, to the seer, is a cosmic symbol, and inviolable. The first and real Home is Heaven, where the Tri-Une secret of His Being makes God One. Of this primal Home, the earthly family is a natural sacrament, ere ever we think of Christ and the Bride ; the rudest wigwam in which squaw ever lighted fire for brave and babe is a Holy of Holies ; it is a model of that Home of ineffable light, and the Divine Family is witnessed in it, in measure as love's fealty is there. The general blindness, or indifference, to this issue is a serious symptom, as the case may be, of the modern head or heart.

Is this discovery a shackle, a throw-back to our freedom ? To thinking men it is a franchise and a title-deed. As the sons of banished princes might conserve some royal usage and forget its source and meaning, so man, in plighting troth to woman and " worshipping her with his body," could never have known to what a type he was conforming, had not the Eldest of the Family drawn near and hailed him " son " and " brother." The Word veiled the terror of His glory and left the Bosom of the Father. Love descended into soul and matter to teach us whence we drew that sacred mystery of Union, and to raise it, by His own Marriage with our flesh, to its divinest power of fruition and of fruit.

Thus takes place what I may call the Introversion of the Blessed Trinity. The Third Person, as though fulfilling some mysterious rhythm, assumes the function of the First, and, upon a human

mother, begets again the Second in a new mode of being and of life. Before our eyes, in our midst, there appears a new Society, a Human Family[1] among human families, and yet ideally an earthly Trinity—Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

Because our eyes, still earthward-bent after the old manner of the beast, had missed their proper Luminary, too dazzling in the heavens, we are taken to Nazareth, and bidden to look in at the lowly door ; and in the strong and reverent wardship of blessed Joseph and the selfless love of Mary, and the loving subject obedience of the Child Who makes earth a colony of heaven, we see, beneath the light of a stable-lamp, what we are ripe to know of our veiled eternal Origin and Goal ; and in this lovely picture we cannot miss the knowledge either of God's meaning or of His will.

Whether the tale be true, of the bearing by angels of that Holy Home to Loretto, I do not know ; the little that I know of wonder seals my tongue when I would say, of any strange truth-bodying thing, "It cannot be." Certainly I can think of that Home as spiritually multiplied and broadcast through the earth ; and perhaps that is what the story means : for wherever round the altar of a hearth there is plighted love and faith in being, whether fulfilled in children or in the spiritual issue of its own vibrations, there is the Holy House.

The prophet Ruskin is scarce read now ; but I cannot refrain from quoting his beautiful words : "Wherever a true wife comes, this home is always

[1] I mean, of course, ostensibly—as touching St. Joseph's foster-fatherhood.

round her. The stars only may be over her head; the glow-worm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot; but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar, or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far, for those who else were homeless." [1] For the blessed wife and mother is the home's heart; from her radiate its seven joys, through her its seven sorrows pierce.

And though we know wherein that Nazareth is different from our homes, with a difference which is the soul of its likeness and relation to them—that that Child is God's Self and Son, and owns that just and kindly carpenter only as foster-sire; though we know that that Mother is ever-Virgin, and that were it otherwise there could be in it nothing either divine or sacramental; yet easily we discriminate the mould, and read the obverse and the inverse. For in this white love of virgin for Virgin, with no tinct even of passion incarnadined, we read no slur on passion. Passion is the natural frenzy of love in bondage; it is love's straining at the leash of flesh, and itself proves love divine. Nay, in Nazareth's exalted scene we see the selflessness of true love, which our ideal Bridegroom emptied of passion, that passion might not by us be abused or deified.

And so the Great One comes on earth to sanctify and order human Wedlock, that lovely thing new and old, taken from the Bosom of God; pronounces it, in His discourses, sacrosanct; makes a wedding-

[1] *Sesame and Lilies.*

gift the sign of His first manifestation to His disciples ; and hallows home for ever by His perfect tenderness to His Mother. His two seeming remonstrances to her are recorded, not to unteach our homage to her queenhood, but to prove the rule of His unchangeable devotion to her who bare Him. And She, in the enshrinement of this ideal "homeliness," helps Him, as she helps Him still, and us ; for who that knows Mary, being husband, wife, or child, could fail to grace a home ? Blessed are they of whose nuptial rites it can be said, "The Mother of Jesus was there."

Finally, the blessed Principle, born in heaven and enthroned on earth, puts on its cosmic crown—in the mystic Spousals of the Bride. He Who was Son in heaven and earth becomes Himself the Bridegroom. Sleeping in death upon the Cross, from this second Adam's side is taken, in Sacramental Blood and Water, His spiritual Bride, the second Eve. Bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, she is the extension of His new Humanity. John, the Paranymph, has prepared all things ; the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready. She is arrayed in clean linen, white and pure ; for fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

He is her Head, her Husband, and her Food ; He has cleansed her with the washing of Water by the Word, has presented her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. He is wedded to her and she is one with Him, One Flesh in the New Humanity. "My Beloved," she says, "is Mine, and I am His ; until the day break, and the shadows flee away." As in Heaven

we found the source of Marriage and at Nazareth its pattern, so here, as it were between heaven and earth upon His Cross, in this eternal and unutterable Union of God with man, we learn its meaning and its end. Every human bridal is a parable of this, and a means towards it ; for what higher ideal can there be for man and woman than to people, of their love, the New Jerusalem ?

Such is the triple revelation—Trinity, Nazareth, Redemption—by which God has made known, in ever-deepening light, His law—that is, life's law, the supreme and only law, the law that will triumph, will bless and trample—concerning Marriage. If we know God's will in anything, we know that these three revealings are one, and that Marriage is a sign or sacrament of it. To wit, that it is not a lease or contract, but a union ; that it makes of male and female a single physical entity ; and that therefore, for the period of incarnate life—the only plane upon which it functions in the sense known to our experience, seeing that the body is the medium of the union—it is, like all real union, indissoluble.

Therefore, though all the States in the world decree it, there can be no " Divorce," no rending or annulling of the marriage-union. It is a departure from a Type from which there is no appeal. And this, not because a man is tied to his wife, but because they are one. Our Lord has not left us to deduce the law from any type or mystery, or treat it as an open question ; He has made it express and clear. Indeed, it may be called the only specific social law He laid down. He based His Kingdom,

not like Moses with a body of ethical or ecclesiastical enactments, but in a cycle of spiritual oracles. Yet one might wonder, reading this Commandment in the Sermon on the Mount, if the Mount were Sinai !

And His teaching upon the point is unreserved, unconditional. He is credited with saying, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, committeth adultery." He never made this reservation at all.[1] He taught that man and wife are one, and that for no cause can they be two, though they were separated by the whole width of the world ; and therefore that the pretended re-marriage of either, in the lifetime of the other,

[1] Whether this mandate were uttered once or twice, we have four records of it. They are given, with the alleged reservation, in Matt. v 32 and xix 9 ; and in Mark x 11 and Luke xvi 18, without any reservation at all.

In the second passage the clause is clearly an interpolation. The overwhelming presumption, therefore, is that it is so in the first. Moreover, in Matt. v 32 it makes nonsense. If a man divorced his wife for adultery, how could he "cause her to commit adultery," seeing that she has already done so ?

Also the whole tenor of the passages stultifies the reservation. Our Lord is repealing absolutely the Mosaic concession of divorce (Matt. xix 3 ff.) ; and absolutely He concludes, "What then God has joined together, let not man put asunder" ; what room is there here for conditions ?

And why, if He had made this concession, should the disciples be dismayed at His enactment ? (Matt. xix 10). And why did not St. Paul, in his clear and unequivocal recapitulation (1 Cor. vii 10, 11), for which he claims direct inspiration, repeat any such condition ?

Beyond a doubt the words are an interpolation in the interest of the Jewish school of Shammai, or of some early Christian predilection. Men tinker with the oracles of Truth, because they want Christ and their own self-will together.

is Sin. He taught that man was not to sunder what God had joined. He taught that mere Divorce is adultery, because it implies the freedom of re-marriage.

And through the lips of His great Apostle, by special revelation, He taught the same : "To the married I enjoin—not I, but the Lord—that a woman shall not depart from her husband (and if she should depart, let her remain unwed, or be reconciled to her husband) and that the man shall not leave his wife."

Amid much of Christ's teaching that is difficult this commandment stands like a rock. To flout it, and profess any sort of faith in Him, or acknowledge any benefit from His Kingship, is to confess an order of mind which speaks ill for spirit and heart.

Marriage, as I have said already, is physical union after promise. Different states, different societies, may safeguard or adorn it in various ways and with various ceremonies ; in its essence it is one and the same. Its integrity, its indissolubility, is just the same whether it have the blessing of the Church or not, unless, indeed, for the added mockery of the Name of the Trinity, with its natural deepening of judgment. If it be performed before a Registrar in an office, a greater Commissioner of Oaths records the pact. It is the witnessed statement, sealed in the accordant act, "I take this woman," "I take this man."

And any Christian priest or minister who performs the null ceremony of marriage over any persons, one or both of them being thus one with

any other living person or persons, sacrilegiously mocks a Sacrament, flouts the mandate of the Son of God, and causes a man and woman to sin against plighted oath and order human and Divine.

Nor will any Christian, who is jealous for the honour of his King, socially countenance such a sin. They who wittingly and willingly condone a lie in the face of a law of Jesus, how shall they wash their hands of the taint of their consent? At least, they are no faithful soldiers and friends of the Nazarene.

It is the plain duty of loyal Catholic Anglicans to obstruct and resist, before the decay inherent in it come to fullness, all legislation tampering with the ordinance of the King of heaven and earth. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for war?" And what clear corporate Christian voice has yet been raised for Christ in this matter, save indeed, as I intimated, the voice of the Roman Catholic Church?

God's laws are evolution's laws. The blind stupidity of a "State" un-stating the Family—which is as much its equilibrial and component unit as is the planet of the solar system or the electron of the atom—is one of the most melancholy problems of an "enlightened" age. Or would be so, could we believe that sound polity were the meaning and true end of "policy," public good the inspiring principle of party, and virtue more precious than a vote.

IX

Love the Saviour of Life

As the passion to which the child owes its being is a type of the eternal fruition of love, so is the child a signature of love's eternal fruitfulness.

The final cause of Duality is Trinity, and Trinity is the essential ground of Unity. Our intuition will not rest in Two ; it is a pause, a promise, a penultimate, an irresolution. Interchange is beautiful ; but there is no profit or progress in it of itself. As an isolated Unit is no concept, so is Duality an imperfect one. Two is incompletion; the lowest and the only conceivable base of being is Three.

For Unity is not a mere negation of plurality, nor is it primary thereto : it is its resolution and seal. Unity does not arise until you have Plurality as a foil and starting-point. Unity understands something to unite—which must be more than Two, because no reciprocity can endure unless it produce. For existence, Duality ; for permanence, Trinity.

By being Two, God becomes Relation, which is the only conceivable basis of Being ; by being Three, He becomes One ; for only by eternal product of Relation is He perfected and sustained as an Entity. In the Father I see Existence ; in

the Word, Resistance ; in the Spirit, Consistence. In that He is Love, God Is ; in that He is Fruitful Love, He abides and is Eternal. The Trinity produces the Unity ; and the Unity abides, by Trinity, for ever.

This ground we have traversed already, but the thought is so transcendental that it tends to slip the mind ; and it is the whole text of our study in the philosophy of Love. For the act of Love, by which the Father and the Word relate Themselves and produce the Spirit, is reflected and typified in that ultimate union of man and woman, which is "honourable in all," and by which life is ever kindled and mankind prolonged in the face of death.

It is in the utter contrast of the two acts that we see the correspondence. The one is eternal, the other the most ephemeral thing in existence ; the one is sublimity's self, the other—what it is. The one is the still Estuary of the Infinite, the other the turgid torrent of the infinitesimal. Yet both are fountains of the great deep of Life ; and there is no Life but one. Could men conceive, perceive, receive this truth, then should no swinish foot befoul the springs He sends among the valleys of death to find their Source and Sea.

Now both these loves are fruitful, and both their fruits are life, and are abiding. But the Fruit of the great Love is eternal, and that of the lesser is successive. The difference lies in death. "Man" is immortal, but "men" must die. The lower life, like the Higher, is prolonged by dual vital interchange. But, while the Divine Union is a

deathless and eternal act, the human is in its nature mortal, and contains the sentence of death.

Mortal love is a ransom paid continually by life to death, who holds the "right of way." As the ancient firstborn, "devoted" to Divine destruction, was "redeemed" in mercy, so death at every bridge takes toll of life in love. For the very fact that lives should yield themselves to make another life is a challenge to death, and their survival is an indulgence won from it—or, indeed, from God. For shall created things dare to emulate the Immortality of God, and pay Him no indemnity?

Look now more particularly at the whole relation of Love and Life and Death. Considered objectively, Love is the sustentive and extensive power of Life. It is the Self-creative principle in God, and in all life that flows from Him. All life, like God, is creative; and the lever of all creating is love.

Considered subjectively, Love is the desire of Life to externalise its whole content in a gift—and, by so giving, to reproduce itself. The second of these desires may be implicit and unconscious. Yet it is an essential part of love. Love has many forms, and various degrees of consciousness. It may ask nothing but to serve unknown. Even so, its ultimate quest is to impress itself upon the thing loved. I am dealing with love in the abstract, as a force; the essence of that force is life's desire to precipitate itself.

Now to do this—to part with life—as we matter-bound things know life, is to die. Therefore the quest of love is a quest of death. This law arises,

though He cannot die, in God Himself. The Divine Persons, to produce their eternal Unity, pour Themselves into One Another ceaselessly and utterly ; They seek, therefore, that which would be incessant death, were it possible that They could die.

But their Life has in it no perishable element, as has ours ; they " burn, and are not consumed " ; and the product of Their Love is ever-living God. This principle has passed from God into created life ; it, too, loves, and, loving, seeks to lose itself in love, and so produces life. But, being bound in corruptive matter, it tastes the mortal wound of love, and finds the death it craves.

When we set love in this perspective, much light breaks upon us. The first thing we see is that death by love is doubly robbed of victory, and that all life is triumphantly immortal. Love, in heaven and earth, is life's champion and warden. As consummately upon the Cross, so from the beginning to the end, love is life's protector from death. It is a kind of homœopathy. By bidding life seek death, love draws death's sting ; by giving, life is gained ; by losing, found ; by dying, death is cheated : redeemer and saviour, love, we greet thee!

Not without cause does Eros bear the bow ; for, loving, we are impelled to wound ourselves, that inoculate we may meet the great wound of death. Love, life's high-priest, makes death the altar of its own destruction. Not without vision was the phallic mystery, profane to love's profaners, everywhere enthroned of old upon the earth ; for they

who said "Love is God" were not so ill-equipped to learn that "God is Love." We have all felt the pathos of Watts's great picture, where little Eros puts out his puny hand to stay the inexorable, entering Death. Who will portray Love as the mighty god, through death destroying death—the very type and herald of the CHRIST?

By grace of love, then, all life is immortal and eternal. Fanned by the breath of love, which seeks to extinguish life but only spreads it, life is a spreading fire; stamp out this flame and that, the subtle sparks fly abroad, new fire is kindled every way, the unconquerable blaze beats on. Ever flame joins with flame and glows, till there is nothing to consume; then the twin flare sinks and dies, but tiny tongues are creeping forth to colonise the field. "From two lives given," says Love, "shall new life arise"; the gift of life, let dying follow when it may, is the symbol and the soul of death. What does love make of death, then, but a prophylactic against itself? Thus love is strong as death, and stronger. In its sacred flame that phœnix, life, renews itself; by its command the pitchers are broken, that the lamps may shine forth.

It is from this vision of the godhead and priesthood of love, lord and saviour as it is of life itself, that we learn two things concerning it: its sanctity and its responsibility. First, its sanctity. Of this I have said much, and shall say more. Suffice it here that he who trifles with it, or profanes it to the sordid service of his animal soul and senses, hazards more and greater peril to the psychic interpoise of being—that I may not say, to his own

well-being, here and hereafter—than he can reckon. Lustful men and women are like wanton children, playing with the levers of the universe.

What power is given us in heaven and earth! Power like God's own; creative power He cannot un-give or gainsay. When we think of our endowment of free will, we seem to see Him parting with the first prerogative of Godhead. Who can withhold amazement when He says to us, "Creators, create yourselves"? We are wont to think of that first Fiat as an act of power; yet I am almost tempted to incur the charge of Deism, and mistake it for an act of abdication! One incidental thought emerges: that there must have existed, in that abyss which is God, an unimaginable need of us.

But the sanctity of the trust! This surely cannot be overstated; nay, it cannot be expressed. Like a vast invading army, life is marching through the realms of matter, exploring, adapting, conquering; in its vanguard, hewing the narrow path to Christ and freedom, is the little battalion called mankind; and the palladium it carries, without whose sacred *numen* the whole host would strew the valleys in a generation and leave the earth a dead and silent sphere, is Love. When the children of Israel marched over Jordan the men of war went behind and before; but in the midst was the Ark—the empowering symbol of continuity and victory, without which the Land of Promise had proved a valley of dry bones for Abraham's sons. As the Priesthood to the Covenant, as the Temple to the Theocracy, as the altar to the throne, so is Love to Life.

Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise : Love is supreme over all. If Love—the spring and core of present being and the inspiration of the future—be not inviolate ; if Love in this day of light divine and human be fair prey for fools and satyrs : then there is nothing reverend upon earth, and therefore nothing holy in heaven ; let us eat and drink, for we die.

And this sanctity of love is at once the issue and the inspiration of its responsibility. Let me appeal to the book of Nature : a writing older than the Prophets, and to be read by those who run. The tree of life has parted into two branches. These have evolved respectively along the lines of Instinct and Intelligence. At the top of one branch is the insect tribe called Hymenoptera ; the other has culminated in man.

Instinct is an indefinite knowledge which comes of cognate sympathy with Being ; Intelligence is the developed power to focus this consciousness, and so to know after the mode of co-ordination, reason, and abstraction of idea. Instinct is the pure awareness of Life or Soul ; Intelligence is the power to delimit this awareness, arrange it, and build upon it. Of the two, Instinct—which survives in us in the form of a slowly fading intuition, for we cannot have everything—is the nearer to ultimate truth ; for it lies at the breasts of Nature, and draws its secrets from the beating of her heart.

Let us learn, then, of our invertebrate cousins, the bees. They have a polity and a religion, and

the two are intimately one ; we may almost call it a theocracy. For their whole life, corporate and individual, is governed absolutely by an ideal ; and this ideal they worship with a religious symbolism unsurpassed by any liturgy our mystic sense devises. Work and worship divide their conventual hours. They are like the angels. When they are not doing the will of their deity in ministry abroad, they are serving its altar.

Their god is an idea ; a mystery inapprehensible, because always future ; and its image or sacrament, about whose shrine they busy themselves, is their queen. For her, their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Her, with admired care and judgment, they rear, they house, they deck, they tend and shield, they feed with choicest sacrifice ; they enter her sanctuary with reverence, leave it with backward genuflexion. Why ? What is she ?

She is Love. She, queen of the order of priestesses that join the flowers in wedlock, is herself the priestess and the symbol of Immortality ; she is Our Lady of Life. She is the Future. Her nuptial flight is the event to which their whole generation moves ; to the single rapturous instant of her spousals in the blue vault of heaven, their national history is one long Advent, the spirit of their hive one service.

Against that empyrean wedding-day a thousand vestals tend the stud of sottish drones, and keep them drunk with honey, that a single stalwart may win the race of love, and sire, at his own life's cost, the great desire of the hive—one more heritage of

immortality, one more captivity led captive by love from the prison of death.

The mystery consummated, the new age begins ; the skulking, distanced suitors are massacred with an Odyssean thoroughness ; and of her—who by a mysterious consummation is now a myriad-fold both sire and mother—proceeds, like the new incarnation of a Buddha, the eternal Palingenesia of Life. What a cycle of sacrifice ; what a " flinging of gifts with both hands into the abyss of the future " ! What a holocaust of death to life ; what a libation of virginity to love !

This " Life of the Bee " is written in Maeterlinck. And there is much mystery in it, incidental to my point, which is not written in Maeterlinck ; but which, in the tale he tells with naïve unconsciousness, is under the light of Christian intuition very clearly seen. These are things beautifully and delicately holy, but in that measure only the meeter to be told. For men and women " miss the many-splendoured thing " ; they trifle with vast and terrible forces, because they have no seer to read them the uncounted lessons of that oldest Bible, whose hieroglyphs are pictures of the Christ. I pretend no seership, but such vision only, as the Cross may give to its simplest disciple.

And in the Queen of the Bees I see the Covenant Principle, the long-barren Woman of world-hope ; who, under innumerable changing figures but still the same (as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, the Woman of the Sun and Moon), pervades the mystic Israel-saga ; the " Jerusalem in bondage " to whom it is said at last " Rejoice, thou barren that travailest

not." In the unprofitable herd of drones I see the ancient people, nurtured through the ages with lavish and untiring care, only that One of their blood and stock—"the Seed to Whom the Promise was made"—should prevail at the end of ages to make fertile the fruitless Covenant, and bring Life and Immortality to light.

> There was none other good enough
> To pay the price of sin.

In the realisation of "the profound idea of Nature, that the giver of life should die at the moment of giving," I see the Self-Oblation of the Cross, through which Love gave Life to His Bride, that the eternal Sacrifice might cause us all to be born anew; it is the breaking of that "very precarious hazard, that kind of transparent membrane, which divides death from love." In the massacre of the drones I see the doom of Jerusalem and the Covenant Nation, which followed when their purpose was fulfilled. In the new generation I see "as many as received Him," children of Himself and of His Bride, "to whom He gave authority to become children of God."

And in all the charactery of love in Nature, which is the many-broidered vestment of the Word, I read —where I am given the light to read at all—the sign and sacrament of an ineffable Power; which is the life of life; which is in a mysterious sense God Himself; whose claim is more imperious and its effects more paramount—and therefore its functions more responsible—than any known influence, force, or thing; and which all ranks of living things,

short of man the heir, would seem to know and serve with understanding—and hold inviolate.

And in its manifesting and its various ministry I cannot choose but recognise, as in old Israel's Temple service, the prophetic signature of Christ. "That which was made, in Him was Life." As, in the new-flowering love-time and spring of the year, when "Jesus from the ground suspires," He set the earnest of His Resurrection; as He made seed-time and harvest rehearse the destined cycle of His Birth and Death and Life: so in the whole apocalypse of that creative Power, which is so manifestly His effluence that our crude minds might almost deem it more, He has "declared the End from the Beginning."

X

Love's Unveiling in Mankind

When, then, having scaled the ascent of Becoming, we arrive at Man—the reasonable soul susceptible of revelation and apt for understanding in the fear of the Lord—we seek in him some consciousness of this vision, and some holy pride and fear therein. Did one entrust a precious gift to little children, we could not reasonably look that they should prize or guard it ; grown to manhood, we suppose that they will draw it forth and honour it with new understanding, safe bestowing, careful using.

Man is come into his heritage of ages, made initiate in his vast possessions by a Father : " All that I have is thine ! " What shall he do ? When he has built a temple to the Lord and Giver of Life, shall he not rear in it a high altar and a tabernacle beyond price ; and, lifting up this sacrament of Love—the life of life—enshrine it behind the veiled and golden doors ?

My thought is not too exalted or too venturesome; it has been in a measure realised ; for all pure romance and poetry of love, whereof right men and women rightly never weary, is but the extra-liturgic cult of love—its expositions, its benedictions, its novenas and processions. Yet Love was not ordained, adorable as it is, to be carried about, lifted

up, or worshipped. It was given to be the housel of man and maid, that of their holy communion in God with one another, life might yet once more, and in new ways, cheat death. This is the end of love ; and the end of life is the Kingdom of God.

Yes, man's "natural religion," one would think, should be the worship of love, that tender mystery which his brute ancestors have held inviolate. After its long wanderings among the Philistines, who did it no violence, it is surely time the Ark were carried to Zion.

And, indeed, I know of no divinity who has been more worshipped among men than love. Formal and informal have been the sacrifices offered to him in all times and climes and lands, conscious and unconscious the homage at his shrine. The worship of love, revealed in the human soul as something greater than passion, has blessed and ennobled our race ; and for men and women who have caught from Christ the vision of its sacramental mystery and holy fear, it can contain diviner joy and blessing than cynics and profaners dream.

They perceive that the Lord Love, like the true Love's Self, came down from heaven in the beginning ; that through all the slow ages he has dwelt with life, an Emmanuel disguised in lowliness —"I am among you as he that serveth" ; that now at length he stands transfigured in the glory of his great Original, the Son of God made manifest. There is no friend of true lovers, like Christ ; nor any betrothed or wedded happiness so deep and sweet as theirs can be, who are one in His Heart, and read deeper even than their joy.

Yet this new unveiling of love to mankind is conditioned with a cost tremendous and appalling. Every higher call of evolution courts its answering reaction in its measure, every new commandment its backsliding; the shadows deepen with the brightening sun. It is the secret of Evil, which, in itself, is a minus quantity; a growing negation of good; an ever-materialising wraith, which has haunted, at every step, the Godward progress of life.

In this new commandment of love, we see the principle at its height. Contemplate first the scene; the stage as set for the entrance of the serpent. To the new organism man, there came—of God, but in the natural mirror of his new-cleared soul—a new vision of the relation of the male and female. Like many another divinely-imaged power and quality, like speech and memory and reason, this great discovery of love's content was not wholly new. There is in the fruitful love-messages of the flowers an ideal whose beauty outsoars a girl's most delicate dream of spiritual union with the chosen of her heart. There are God's creatures of the earth and sky and sea in which the imperfect dawn of marital and parental love, within the limits of its quality, is a wonder for our learning. Yet we must credit even prehistoric man with the knowledge of a wife-love and a child-love as far excelling that of nest or lair, as the power of co-ordination excels instinct, or abstract thought the scent of home or prey.

And when love's spiritual revelation comes, taught by the Bride of Christ, to Christian man and woman, then is the creature, above all that were before him,

crowned with glory and honour as an answerable son of God. There is no higher call to man, no steeper gradient of our Christian climbing, than the law of Christian Marriage, save, indeed, one—the call to renounce it for the love of the heavenly Spouse Himself, which comes to the Religious.

For we are bidden to look with new eyes upon the sex-relation. It is less purely functional, more personal than we knew. We are to see in it more than the blind brute instinct, the mechanism of illusion set in activity by the forces of life to prolong an aimless invasion of the matter realm. It is still and ever, in truth most paramount, the mould and factory of life ; that is its beginning and its end for ever ; but life itself is moving to a change, and for life's sake love sanctifies itself.

Love, therefore, is now seen to share more deeply the character of life, to claim a wider interest in the phases and activities of living ; it becomes a deep source of psychic and moral values in itself ; yes, of spiritual. Its actions and its passions have their root in souls and entendril them together, not in paroxysm, but in substance ; not merely perpetuating organic life, but consolidating moral life and strengthening its social body, as it were by a mutual reinforcement of its cells. Physically it is all that it ever was, and, in the measure of its psychic sublimation, unutterably more. But its fleshly impulses are fain to confess themselves responsible : they have a messiah in the soul, and by him are purged, and born again of heart's desire.

And it is in the female specially that this redemption vests itself. She becomes the wardress

and the sacristan, as of love's fruit, so of love's self. No longer is she one of many occurrent objects of the male's caprice, left to bear and nurse her brood, that they may desert her for her pains. She is now his help-meet and his life-mate—not the passing fascination of his eyes, but the chosen of his heart; she is dear to him—something is given and taken incorporeally which neither can return or reclaim; and, not as one craves a feast to be consumed and forgotten, she desires him and he her, because he is he and she is she; and, each by each taken to the uttermost, love grows by taking, not wanes; and in the body's sacrament, moved to be one flesh because they were one soul, they find soul's oneness sealed.

So in human wedlock (and I speak of that true wedlock which is more prevalent than prominent, because happiness is quiet) love's kingdom has undergone a sort of silent revolution. "Out of thee shall come a ruler." The corporeal union, ever first in functional order, becomes second in spiritual, because it has appeared that man is the image and son of God. Man and wife are inspired to increase and multiply, not their image merely, but their virtues and their graces.

As when two flames unite, this pair blend their unreplenished moral forces, and the multiple is more than the sum. As the exhausted cells unite and share their nuclei, so two lone hearts conspire against their spiritual impotence. Filling up, each at the store of each, their lacking measures, they build up that psychic complement, whose constituents answer to the Understanding and the Soul;

that unity which shall be realised in every individual saint, when perfected in Christ the Husband.

For in Him is neither male nor female, because the two are one transcendently in Him ; and the soul made one with Him shall be her own eternal fruit. The wedlock blessed and shaped by God is a prayer to be fruitful in children ; but immortality is more than racial ; the day of the Individual has dawned, and those fruits of grace and service, which man and wife can bring forth each to each, are themselves "an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord." "For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife ?"

In this great light, then, that has dawned in the earth, our high-grown animal nature casts a shadow dark and terrible. The new commandment "that we love one another," interpreted of man and woman, calls for the restraining and policing of the strongest and most imperious instinct of the flesh ; an instinct which, since veteran life first learned by the law of recoil to counter death, has known no moderator and no master save the mechanical tidalities of nature ; for no other was needed. Now that a callow upstart, called Intelligence, has been put in commission, these forces have become self-conscious. Summons to order, suggestion of revolt. To be tamed and leashed, to truckle to a regent ? "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child."

What is the issue ? What is the secret of all evil,

but the call to higher good? What is that which rises an active enemy to all effort, but the resistance of its own inertia? The force that strains an equilibrium is the cause and measure of reaction. "The strength of sin is the law." St. Paul's masterly psychology proclaims him a teacher sent from God. Things once free for the taking, once you ration or forbid them, discover all at once a new fascination. What we were left to do of old and did unheedingly, and now may not do or may do only by privilege or licence, we are all agog to do for doing's sake, and in despite of the commandment.

Nay, we become choice in our sweet rebellion, and refine upon the forbidden thing and revel in excesses and perversions, and make a ceremonial of our lawlessness, just because we see the light beckoning and fear its purity. The glutton and the drunkard and the libertine have devised new and real pleasures for themselves, delights undreamed-of by their forbears in scale or fur, whom no one ever challenged with the assurance that they were sons of God. They may have, it may be, no conscious zest in disobedience; yet, witting or unwitting, they owe their rapturous revels to a law—and the knowledge of it. "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for I had not known sin, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." And when I sin, I am proclaiming myself nothing more brilliant or more daring (though I chuckle with the pride of hurting God) than an evolutional suicide.

This strain, then, of the evolutional crisis in man

is well reflected in his estimate and treatment of the vital principle in him called love. In the mentality of man—the subject of two opposing forces, an upward urge and a downward pull, as it were " torn in two "—love's self has suffered a dichotomy. I do not know what name to give to that better half of love, which poor foolish man, in his own Procrustean agony, has snapped off and left torn and bleeding ; the other is called Eros, and has in it no evil, save in its divulsion from that higher self which is destined to survive it.

Love has its psychic and its physical poles ; but in right love, as touching the present stage of its manifestation, they are one ; soul is met and sought for body's sake, body possessed and cherished for soul's. As do body and soul themselves, the two ideas merge without boundaries one into the other. In all infra-human stages of the organism the sensuous self of love has been primary. To man, his riper nature has made known love's psychic glory, while spiritual depths, diviner and more mysterious, have been opened by the Christ. And in the " Christened " man, the higher and the lower love for woman are a hypostatic union ; but, as with Christ's two Natures, the one is primary, the other is subsumed ; the lower is for the higher, the higher is for itself.

Now it is matter for no surprise that man, the novice of the soul, should find it hard to unlearn the old pre-occupations, to unfurl his new-fledged wings and soar into love's rarefied heights of heart-desire and holy troth. Were this the limit of our trouble, there should be no despair, and this late day

of grace might well have found us further on the road of true humanity, if not of New. But, alas! the steepness of the way is not all that hampers us. It is not because Love sits upon the Mount of Olives and we lie low in the valley that Love laments over us, nor even because we will not know the things which belong unto our peace.

It is because we have made a golden calf called Lust, and crowned it with love's myrtle : " These be thy gods, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt ! " It is because the thing that we call love is not love at all, any more than the thing we call life, and living, is life ; or than that depleted fallacy is Christ, which we conventionally call Christ. It is because in our repugnance from the call of love's ideal we have recoiled into a slough which shames our forefathers of the forest and the sea.

At the hint of regeneration we have become degenerate. Because we caught a new vision of love's head of gold, we have seized and kissed its feet of clay ; what from the beginning of the world was natural and therefore pure, we have marked apart with curious conscious leer, and for its own sake raised it to a cult, and made for it a shrine of the very shame we bring upon it—which as sanctity should have been its hallowing, but which as shame is our own disgrace.

To the race of men, like a Christ, love first revealed itself, and they have rent it, as upon a cross, body from soul ; and though they part its garments among them, its sweet life ever eludes their grasp and sense, who sever its unity, not discerning its godhead. Did I raise my voice against

"divorce"? But it is only a symptom; upon the disease I had not yet put finger. We divorce love's unions because we have divorced love's self.

This divulsion of love is the genesis of Lust, which is a heresy against love, the Nestorian monster of our Gnostic soul-choice, and of all love's enemies the deadliest and the most implacable. And love's enemies are life's, because Love is the Life of Life.

XI

Our Responsibility to Love

Yes, Lust is the worst enemy of Love, because it is a travesty of it. It is murdered Love's mutilated meaningless torso. It is a wild boar wallowing among lilies, a Caliban gorging a sacrament. Joy flies from it like a frightened spirit, because it is murder's self; its thirst is never slaked, because he who shivers the vessel spills the wine; its quest is never realised, for let not him think to snare the music who breaks the lute.

And because love is the Ark of life, life avenges it. None can tamper with that sanctity and go unpunished, though the blow fall late and the sacrilege be forgotten; yet life does not forget. Life, inexorable in its retributions from the beginning, has hitherto contended with sloth, not with treason. At every turn of its long journey it has encountered resistance from its servants as from its foes; its story from the primal cell is one of slow and patient victory over the reaction of immovable content.

But, as life nears its goal, there springs up to it a new adversary. To the mere kick at life's counsels of perfection is added the sheer hatred of life's laws. The beast is conscious of no law; its obedience is sympathy, its temperance content. Law is there,

exacting as any Draconian code ; but it reigns in blood and bones. Ignobly shifting blame, we call vice " bestial " ; what beast, since life began, was ever known to eat or drink itself to death—save, indeed, at the instance of some foolish human pampering ? Through lack of power or wit to correspond with material conditions, God's creatures die in myriads ; for no abuse of their own life is any threat of death visited upon them.

But life is learning to create better, and to the more perfect creature, the Creator owes more confidence ; and knowledge confers responsibility, and responsibility involves authority in calling to account. When reasonable soul appears, life must come out from its disguise and declare itself as law. Law is an appeal to wills that are intelligent and free ; and law revealed is a revelation of lawlessness, and an incentive to it. Therefore we are arrived at a crisis in Becoming, when the sword, that went behind as a goad, must be borne before—for accolade or doom.

For we have rebelled progressively against a progressive light. We have defied the law of nature and the law of grace. First, " that which may be known of God is manifest in us, so that we are without excuse " ; but under the dawn-glow of that moral law we have discovered Vice, and drawn it into ourselves. Further, in Christ we have been vouchsafed the vision of heavenly purity, rising like a star above the way that bridges death ; but with eyes shut to that great Light we have skulked into its fascinating shadows, and learned the deadly art of Sin. Seeing, then, that Life is one, and Love is

one ; and that Love and Life are one : if despite be done to Love, shall not Life avenge it upon body and soul ?

For Love is sacred to Life, and Life, concerning it, is jealous. *All fruitless love is doomed to perish.* In all love's kinds and phases (and all are one, for all spring from a root that is divine) this law is seen. The love that is a dual selfishness, whose perpetual change and barter, like commerce on a desert island, yields no profit to the good of others or the cause of truth and rightness, bears within itself the marks of death ; it is fated to consume itself in its own useless fire.

Love is a talent held in trust from life ; life claims its usufruct. Bury it in the napkin of a selfish passion, be sure you will incur some retribution, if it be only forfeiture—and it is ill losing love. For love is not the fleeting fancy-begotten thing that poor cynics would have us think it ; such philosophers are in the dark, for they know only of passion, which is not love's self, but only its occasional robe of state. It is the confusion of love with passion that blinds us to this great messiah ; his kingdom is not of this world alone ; we reject and scorn him, because it seems to us preposterous that he should claim to be something more than Pan.

And it were well if this were the front of our offending. The trouble is that we have made love less than Pan. Pan is a god of fruit. His very hoof is on the face of those who spend his gifts upon their own gloating. The true love (as we have seen) of true man and wife, uncrowned with the natural issue of their desire, may yet fruit in blessing

to the world ; enriched by mutual inspiration, feeding each upon the other, they may send forth vital influences, creative radiations ; and may one day say, amid souls undreamed-of, " Lo I and the children whom God has given me." Life is more than body's breath ; and flesh is not the only kind in which wedlock can repay its debt thereto.

But the immortal destiny, to which natural life is moving, is fed by natural birth ; the Society of perfected spirits, with whom God is ever crowning His glory, is peopled by the act of earthly love ; and every human baby is a potential noble of the Kingdom of God. Life is out on enterprise ; it is not in the world by chance, that swarms of human ephemera may sun themselves an hour and die ; it determines to a purpose ; and to that purpose every reasonable soul, being honoured with life's confidence, is answerable.

Life's loan of love, then, must be paid back in life, or in what serves to life, into the bank of life. If from man and woman, claiming by act and deed this gift, and sharing its fruition, life refuses to accept love's natural usury, that is life's affair ; with a thousand needed precious fruits they may compound the debt. But if man and woman, taking at life's hands the gift of love, think by perverse art to hold it against life ; if they would cheat love of its sacred mission and make it barren eunuch to their chambering : they betray life's trust, they steal heaven's fire, they foreclose the ends of Being, they hamper and postpone the final cause to which the whole creation moves.

No sin can be imagined more cosmic in its scope and daring, no sacrilege more catholic in its assault upon that ultimate sacrament which God and man is. Nothing but an absolute knowledge of Possible Good—which is another name for the unfolding resultant between God's Purpose and the hindering wills of men—could ever give us any concept of the extent of this sin's power for evil, or of the weight of its mortmain against the progress of the arduous plan of life. It is a sin in all men and women, of whatever creed, against the common human light of reason; in Christians it is a stark and heinous sin against the known purpose and Kingdom of God.

That it is a blight upon the temporal health and wealth of man and woman—as unit, family, and state, in soul, body, and polity—must be too lamentably plain to any reader who has thus far companied with us in the spirit of our thought; in a few short generations it will be plain to all the world. Man's mental maladies are cyclic; the spirit of life is his physician, and though its remedies may be grievous, its effects are sure; for failing a recurrent norm of sanity, no flesh could be saved.

For as war is not for the sport or loot of the private soldier, so the goal of life is not the pleasure of the organism; it is, to be raised to the power of divinity, and made a living crown of God for ever. We are out to storm the Kingdom of the Heavens, not to impropriate the pleasant places by the way. That new forces may ever be poured into the onset, that there may be no desinence in the scaling of the breach which is Christ, love's creative power is given; and with it understanding, that in love's solace

and refreshment we may find, not a selfish fool's oblivion of our enterprise, but a richer light upon its meaning and a livelier inspiration to its service.

We are "sent forth two by two," not that dropping out of the apostleship we may sit down to eat and drink and rise up to play, but that we may strive the better for our comradeship, and that the mystery of confluent life may reinforce the ranks of life. As touching this strategy of mutual service, we are not, as our fathers, in the dark. Our General has taken us into His confidence; we are grown aware of the hidden leverage of His plans; He has not withheld from us the cunning whereby, at cost of all the unselfish issues of His purpose, we may turn them to the treachery of our own inert and matter-logged self-will.

They ill requite the Holy Ghost who use so ill a little knowledge gained—as all we know is gained—from the Holy Ghost. What shall such lotos-eaters say? What but this: "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement." The useless drones who gorge the hive's best honey do at least no harm, and in one of them is laid up the seed of martyrdom for the hazard of the future; yet, when that triumphant day of judgment comes, the rest are massacred without quarter. So jealous for its ends and purposes, in creatures so ignorant and small, is life; and shall we fear—"when the waters shall overflow the hiding-place"—no retribution at the hands of Life Eternal?

From my study of "Love and Marriage," that

most constructively-beautiful of all themes, I have turned aside to these morasses with distress and shame. But we may not yet regain the heights. This misappropriation of the trust-funds of nature, reserved for man—the Unjust Steward who in the light of his lord's confidence has discovered the art of wasting his goods—is not to be discounted as an "ecclesiastical" offence, proscribed by priests on pain of some vague future spiritual judgment. It is a poisoned shaft, pointed at the heart of man's material welfare in this world. Concerning this, some plain things must be said.

XII

Love Maimed for Sport

The systematic practice of frustrating nature's law of reproduction—of extracting from love its most ephemeral and least essential gift and disclaiming its responsibility—is a modern phase of human development, and darkly differentiates our days from the whole record of mankind upon the earth. I submit that it is a stark rebellion against capital vital law, and carries its immorality on its face.

Seeing that the contingencies, with which it tampers, operate in untraceable secrecy and darkness ; that their mystery, locked under the key of God, declines our ordering and holds all our guesswork baffled ; and, moreover, that their very preclusion remains as inconclusive as their assurance is impossible : one would have thought that, in so fearful and wonderful an adytum of our being, all that was intended to be inviolate in human nature had taken sanctuary.

Yes, it might have been imagined that if there were any " natural religion " ; that if, in our connatural consciousness, beneath and beyond the clash of creeds, anything self-evidently reverend were given : it would be found in this closely-veiled, creative sacrament of life, which love consecrates mysteriously in her tabernacle ; this arbitrary, god-

like descent of soul into matter, this inscrutably-selective "answer by fire." Scarcely was it to be calculated even that our modern vulgarity would have suffered in its self-respect, had it hesitated at this threshold; or that our most emancipated impiety could find so few shrines to loot, that it need have blushed to leave this inviolate.

Our "primitive" ancestors, amid all their lusts and orgies, worshipped this wonder of hidden incarnation; to them it was a shrine to be hallowed with symbols and orisons. Love in their regard was the spirit of fertility and glad new-making, the seed-time and harvest of perennial victory over death. By close and simple sympathy with being, they knew and revered. They dreamed not, save subconsciously, of the Root of Jesse, the Woman's Seed Who was to purge and sublimate their visions when the time should come.

Well it becomes us to smile indulgently at their crude figures for mysteries whose very bloom of sanctity incites our itch to smirch them: their Aphrodite, their Priapus and Eilithyia, their Yoni and Linga, their Vertumnus, Pomona, and Ceres. With all our light, they were wiser seers, not to say better biologists, than we. Every monolith, every palæolithic circle, witnesses of a day when the creature bowed before those secret forces, tremendous and beneficent, which we are ambitious to "control." We call them "children," those animists of man's less sophisticated days; there are two kinds of children—those who wonder and learn, and those who tamper and destroy.

And these ill-found practices, seeing that their

motive is the apotheosis of that cold and selfish sensuality which has drawn out evolution to some million centuries, are finding naturally in science and religion all the countenance they need; the "science" that knows enough to fumble forbidden levers with its baby fingers, and the "religion" that has a wise eye upon the market of demand and supply. Economy, too, social and political, is invoked in the cause; all things are discovered to work together for good whither Self beckons; in the conspiracy against life, found guilty of "perverting the nation," Herod and Pilate are made friends.

"Human welfare is now menaced by human fecundity," declares a Bishop; "the victory of medicine and hygiene will be disastrous to human welfare unless the desire for many children (!) be held in check." "I am sorry you are not taught not to have them," sternly declaims a Judge to a poor woman in arrears of rent with her seventh pledge of folly in her arms. "It is ruining you and ruining the country; even Bishops are now agreeing that is an unwise thing."

Whether or not this cold impertinence hurled at a poor ragged mother [1] would have been dared to a titled offender in a Worth costume and twenty thousand pounds' arrears for bridge debts, we may leave to conjecture; suffice it that the still small voice of this precious oracle comes well after the thunders of a war which has strewn the world with the manhood-flower of England. These foolish

[1] See the excellent article, "Six Little Steps," in the *Tablet* of June 20, 1925.

assertions well illustrate the stupidity which so often goes with pompousness ; they are base metal, coined in the mint of crooked thinking and narrow vision, and paid to curry favour with a noisy ring of charlatans whose power for mischief is out of all proportion to their brains. Let us nail them to the counter as they deserve.

The selfishness which shirks the burden of children is directed neither to saving nor earning, but to spending ; it is therefore neither an asset to solvency nor a condition of national welfare. To represent the instant generation of to-day, so far as it is possessed with this spirit, as actuated with any idea of averting "ruin from the country," or with any motive of thrift or financial providence, is Gilbertian.

Jeremiads and sweeping strictures are not in my intent ; but the modern restriction-scheme in the production of human life, glorify it as you will, is just nothing but a bid for a good time and no cares ; and its ethical omen is even graver than its social menace. If Christian common sense has any criterion for new sins, this spirit is the judicial dementia which heralds the retribution of heaven.

Your anti-social waster who lives on other people's money, and loves to have it so, is not usually the too-fond parent self-sacrificed to the expenses of a large nursery or impoverished by a batch of school-bills. A brood of idle passions and indulgences more likely claim his spending or his "credit"—smart clothes, tooting motor-cars, bets and "flutters" ; you will find him sound, no doubt, for birth-control—and you may have him

as an advertisement ; of *self*-control, the rudiment of good citizenship, I should not much suspect him ; a stout bulwark, he, against his country's newly sighted "ruin" through the fatal propensity to blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit. It is doctrines such as these that are closing the doors of employment to men and women who still revere the laws of God and nature—"No family man need apply."

Large families, so far from being her ruin, have been and are the builders of England. The home is the school and microcosm of the State. A nation of only children would be a nation of spoilt sensitives, unfit for the battle of life. Boys and girls, in the open commune of home, learn to play the game ; brothers and sisters, in that little growing state where nothing anti-social is tolerated, rub each other's angles down ; "many a blow and biting sculpture polish well those stones elect" of the temple politic.

Selfish individualism, snivelling introversion, the autocentric obsession people flatter in themselves as "temperament," have little chance against those doughty home-standards of pluck and honour ; it is "give-and-take, or go to the wall." Personal independence, a hardy front, a sense of interwoven responsibility, the value of money and the need and art of economic management, a healthier equilibrium in sex-consciousness, and not least that proportion in outlook which is called a sense of humour: all these are taught, or teach themselves, in that world-old lyceum of life which is the family ; which no one pretends to be incapable, in bad conditions,

of other and very different discipline ; yet for whose contribution of sound units to society, it would appear, we have now in any case no use at all.

For what have the æons of human experience taught us ; what discovery, reserved for the last five minutes and now proclaimed from the See and from the Bench, is now to put us wise against the "olive-branch" of a too lavish Mother Nature—not to say against the Divine laws of Life—but this, that "large families are a ruin to the State" ?

Another cogent reason for our "Timeo dona ferentes" attitude to nature is "the over-population of the country." The question is vast and difficult ; aspects and factors, too many and too large for safe treatment by any but the expert publicist, crowd into evidence on either side. But the sensible layman, unblinkered by the wish that blinds the thought, can see over the broad field of facts—yes, and something too in the way of fallacy that he was not meant to see.

To begin with, he can see that this assertion, if true in any sense, is so only relatively ; and that therefore, stated absolutely, it is a falsehood. It is true to the observer who passes through Oxford Circus in the late afternoon ; to him who takes a motor-trip through almost any part of rural England at any time, it is not true. If we have too many people in England, it is because our folk are drawn, by the need of a livelihood, or by that same craving for pleasure which makes children a burden, to the towns and industrial centres, leaving God's fairest land to enjoy, in that measure, her Sabbaths alone.

If we are said to have too many people in England, it is not because a God of fruitfulness requires our tinkering "science" to regulate His largess, but because we depend upon other lands to supply us with our bread and meat and clothing and staple things of life, instead of winning them by labour from the soil that God has given us. Until Great Britain produces its maximum of food, what proof is there for the assertion that "we are over-populated"? I am fully mindful of climatic and other considerations; a people who are past masters in the art to make excuse can find ample material, no doubt, for the manufacture.

Nor am I discussing these conditions in the light of right and wrong, or suggesting that there are not good reasons for them. My point is, first, that they do not, singly or in sum, connote over-population; and secondly, that if they did, it would be our duty, in our own interest not less than in that of every sanctity of Divine and natural law, to exhaust every resource of remedial action before cutting the knot with Herod's sword.

Brigands, when their spoil is insufficient to go round, may agree to "reduce" their number, quietly, with knife or pistol; mutineers at sea, when the rum runs short, may compose the matter by a plan to throw their sleeping comrades to the sharks: but such methods come in question when the cave is surrounded, or there is need to man the ship in a storm. "The earth hath He given to the children of men"; is not this, to say the very least, both a selfish and an improvident way of appropriating the inheritance?

Both nations and the men and women who compose them may grow old and weak and poor ; they may come to times of danger. Where, then, is their prop in need or trouble, if they have "lengthened their cords, and not strengthened their stakes" ? Who shall justify or vindicate them, when they speak with their enemies in the gate ? Where now are the fine old families, lodes of strength and honour drawn through England's history (yes, and many a humbler stock, less notable but not less noble), of whom we hear, "The son was killed in the Great War" ? Who is to blame ? None, doubtless. The fact holds good ; and the warning.

The population of Great Britain, certain economists would have us believe, should be reduced to thirty millions. Let it be admitted. Is it to be effected by cutting down the great old English stock—in a world where Asiatics are multiplying like conies, and the yellow and negro races are a proverbial growing peril ? In no spirit of Jingoism I say that God has marked out our Anglo-Saxon race to be monitors of the world ; and I had rather be an Anglo-Israelite than a Little Englander, and anything whatever than anything but a denouncer of racial treason. Of him who would sacrifice Britain's Imperial charter to a little elbow-room for his amusements, I can say nothing kinder than that he must be self-hypnotised.

Better the German *Ausbruch* that filled the world with blood and fire, than this secret stealthy sapping and smothering[1] of the life-force God has given us

[1] A systematic propaganda by foreign foes amongst us.

to make us "a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." And this when the Dominions are crying out for English citizens and English wives; when the organised emigration that would relieve the congestion in the homeland could be warranted to give the race a new lease of life, and build up hardy sons and daughters, to be props of Albion every way against her teeming ill-wishers, and polished corners of her still-towering temple in the world.

Women of England! raise your altar of reparation to Life and Love, while there is time. Our blood and seed are sound as ever; our poisonous new theory of the ends of marriage is at work to rot them; we may thank ourselves if, when we confess the moral wound we have dealt ourselves and seek the blessing we have spurned, we find that we have sold it with the birthright. Women of England, ambitious for power; in this thing all power is given to you in heaven and earth; and with power, responsibility; and to the responsible falls judgment.

Again I say, it is one thing to throw down and destroy with the besoms of unequipped theory, and another to build and to plant. But that God has called forth our Anglo-Saxon race to do this last, there is none but a dolt who will deny; seeing, then, that our very existence is threatened by this folly from within, the simple who are sane must raise their voices in remonstrance. "We said, Multitude of years should teach wisdom; but great men are not always wise: therefore I also will show mine opinion."

What authoritative and certain voice [1] has gone forth, in this matter, from our Anglican Church? In presence of what vital danger—be it this thing, or Theosophy, or Christian Science, or any form of Modernism so called, or the abomination of Spiritism—has our trumpet of tongues ever given anything but an uncertain sound? What Christian body gives evidence of a soul sound for Christ and His truth, or a mouth to speak it with?

I say, then, if we as a nation are legislating for temporary difficulties, let us try the obvious and sensible methods that offer themselves, before we proclaim a racial *hara-kiri*, which may tempt a very unexpected national judgment. Because a man has outgrown his clothes, he does not starve his flesh; nor, if he lack bread, does he extract his teeth. Already the world is jealous of us; every dog barks

[1] Let me at least quote the following from the "Summary" in the *Church Times* of May 15, 1925: "Race restriction is already having its obvious evil effects. The future of France is threatened by it, and in the United States the English stock is dying out. Large districts in New England, for example, are now almost entirely inhabited by French Canadians. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church, which denounces divorce and birth-control, is every day growing stronger. It was predicted that when the emigration-flow from Europe was brought to an end, the Roman Catholic Church would cease to add to its numbers. As a matter of fact, they are still increasing by, we understand, nearly a hundred thousand a year, and now the great majority of the priests are American-born. The Roman Church in America is growing, and will go on growing; and we are by no means certain that this is not the most important fact in modern history."

at our heels. God's enemies are ours, because His call to us is clear, and we have a little power and have not wholly left our first love.

Would we could arrest our course of decadence and recover a little of the pride which is the vision of duty, and the fear which is a sword against alarms. "Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children": dead words, a Victorian spirit; fine matter for that Young-England giggling which every Briton past his thirties dreads more than any writing on the wall: yet words witnessed by history, and a spirit which has made England great.

My theme is not economy social or political, but love's heavenly origin and destiny as the divine sacrament of life. If for a space I have descended from these heights to lament love's hurts and mockeries at the hands of men—before whose eyes its divinity has been set forth transfigured—it is to make clear that heavenly laws have their protective principles in natural; that they who make common what God has sanctified shall bear in the flesh their judgment, though it tarry.

I would not pretend that life's designs, as served by human agents, ask for any necessary self-consciousness of intention. The appetites life has forged as spurs to vital impulses are frankly to be obeyed (where they are to be obeyed) for what they are. It is in their abstraction from their proper ends that we sin. Nor do I suggest that human exigency may not justify repressions whose alternative might perpetuate some mortal malady, or create new immediate victims of hopeless want; though,

in the latter case at least, the banishment of trust in God's care from the counsels of Christians is hardly to be recommended as a measure of prudence or an asset to blessing.

Be this as it may, the only right birth-control (assuming the rightness of any) is self-control ; and Christian men and women, who understand and revere what I may call the spiritual biology of love, will not without good reason contemplate remission from its charges ; nor even so will they place any cohibition upon its natural laws and causes, save such as may consist in a selective regard to its own rhythms of contingency.

The spirit of life, if Promethean, is genial and generous ; in the same spirit let us accept its gifts, trusting the wisdom and beneficence of its hidden husbandry, which is God's. Shall I, while claiming the use and solace of God's favour, make myself a secret bankrupt, that He may seek His quittance in vain ? Shall the earth receive the grain that comes to clothe her with the golden harvest, and, recusant of her counter-gift of fostering essences, kill it in her traitor-heart ? Have we learned the wonder of our Becoming, only to estop and smother it ?

Truly, when these things are set in the light of parable—and the whole silent universe securely judges what is inverse to its order and its law—it is well seen why Heaven, at the very outset of its encyclical to man and in one brief and reticent but most terrific warning, fore-judged [1] for all time this " covenant with death " : " And God slew him."

[1] Gen. xxxviii 10.

XIII

Love in Flower and Fruit

To praise love is to play Marsyas, and challenge the immortals, who themselves have in every age confessed their muse inexpressive.

Love is vision, therefore its experience is incommunicable. When this loop of light enfolds two souls, their experience is a kind of conversion ; they turn, and as it were see God ; not in one another merely, perhaps least of all, but in all living and being, in earth and sky, and in life's common things. For they are lifted each through the other, as through a medium, into the fringe or penumbra of the sacramental plane, and faintly descry, beneath the wavy veil that is the natural order, the face of God.

As the green leaves, if sunlight be present, can distil and drain from common air the rare element by which they live, so, beneath the ray of love, souls open and breathe the divinity that is poured out unseen through the universe of things. In the light of this new knowledge everything is interpreted.

All nature and all life, surely, are framed for this pair and fulfilled in them ! The meaning of the world is attained. Stars and flowers are eyes, bent in discerning sympathy upon their delight, lifted to the all-crowning mystery of their new birth in one another ; valley and mountain are the earnest of

their kingdom, the moon's track across the sea is the path of their eternal paradise, the huge and thoughtful night a temple for the incense of their wondering silences.

And this glamour is not illusion. The imbecile spirit in the present world, which finds a laughing-stock in lovers' joy, would have us believe it to be a brief madness, an orgy of distorted values, a morbid dream of self-suggestion. I am not thinking of the kindly raillery, half tender and half wistful, which we who love a lover cannot refrain; it is the pleasantry of reverence, and sometimes holds a touch of sadness. I speak of the herd-stupidity which makes a coarse jest of love; nor could there be a surer sign of love's divineness than its reaction upon a fool.

For that very dream of a wonderful new meaning in things, in which true lovers live, and which, with all love's exaltations, it is the paltry pose of modern youth to despise, is vision. It is the vision—brief and fleeting, as must be all vision here—of the real meaning of phenomena, which are all manifestations of the love of God out of which all life flows. The thing half-seen may not be known for what it is; the seer may be a denier of God; yet in the fire caught from God, God is seen; for it is as true that there is one love, as that there is one life. He who loves gets glimpse of the universal Love, because he is attuned to it by sympathy.

They who say "Love is blind" are themselves blind; it is the lover, and he alone, who sees. If love be blind, it is blind to evil; which, with love for cause, is the first condition of seeing good.

I would go so far as to say that love is necessary for the vision of beauty ; that the beautiful face is the face we love, and that no face is beautiful till we love it ; that beauty, whether of body or soul, is correlative with love, and without it cannot arise or be.

To be "in love"—that phrase so exquisitely true—is to rise into love's plane, to be immersed in it, and sense it. The lover has been made free of the real world. Because of this light, revealed through the eyes of the beloved, he discerns the divinity behind every green leaf, the Shape of shapes whose robe is every pearly cloud. The beauty, which they who love see in one another, is not the print of an idealising fancy. It is rather some vision of the actual or the possible good, perceived and known by love the diviner of good. Love may creatively enrich it, may re-cast it in the mould of its own divine conceiving and adorn it with a shrine ; but the gold he discovers in a soul, though it lie deep in dross of ore, is objective and authentic God.

Love will find good where none else discern it, where it is of itself unconscious or despairing ; love will foster and develop good where a saner judge will daunt and quench it ; where should we be, did no Heart beat behind God's just Eyes ? Love finds by seeking and creates by believing, thinking no evil and hoping all things ; there is abundant seed of beauty that is choked and withered for lack of love's tending and watering, and many evil weeds take hold where his sun has not shone.

And this breeding of good upon the beloved

beauty is as much a part of the fruitfulness of love as the begetting of living children. For Love, the creative Logos, peoples every world ; reinforces, not with forms of flesh alone, but with forms of thought, with aspirations, virtues, heavenward yearnings, the eternal campaign of Life.

And the light, in which love descries beauty and the truth and goodness that materialise it, and tends and fosters whatsoever things are fair and of good report, is Purity. By purity I do not mean passionlessness or coldness. That is a prevailing and a vulgar error, hatched out of the darkness which is without vision because it is not pure.

Purity is not the enemy of love, but its faithful servant and guardian. The slander upon this glorious virtue, which makes of it a cold impossible negation, arises from the spirit which would tear love from its divine protection, and bind it to the flesh. Purity is passionless only for those whose vision of love is limited to passion, and impossible to none but him who lets this blindness bind his will. There is no passion like the pure heart's passion ; love's profaners ever " miss the many-splendoured thing " ; his elusive rapturous secrets are kept for those who know his majesty and bow before his laws. The price of living for the senses is the death of sensibility ; the sensual lose the living edge of sense, their fruit in the act of plucking rots at the core, their hunger bites still more bitterly, their cup turns to self-loathing, satiety, and fear ; so jealously is love, the ark of life, avenged by purity, the sacristan of love.

What, then, is Purity? It is not the negation men suppose it. It is the enemy of negation. It is not the abjuration of any faculty, or the suppression of any desire. It is the conception and the culture of a new desire. It is the most constructive of virtues, the most positive principle in the world.

For it is the unitive and Catholic vision of love. It is the truth of love's hypostatic unity, and of the order, proportion, and relation of its two inseparable natures; and the honour of the sacramental ordinance by which we apprehend the substance through the sign. At the heart of love's reddest rose may reign the whitest purity; the coldest abstinence from love may be, in cause and fact, impure.

As the Nicene truth is to the Incarnation of Love's Self, as the sacramental faith is to the Eucharist, so is purity to love. It will suffer no schism of the human from the divine, no use of the material sign dishonouring to its holy content. As Christ is One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God; so in pure love the soul is not absorbed in flesh, but the body is assumed into the service and the sphere of soul.

As, until this day of grace, man lived by bread alone, but now, behind the sign of bread, discerns Angels' Bread and feeds upon It; so into love, known and used from the beginning only as desire of flesh, has come for us men and women a real presence, the hidden beauteous soul that is true love; and the use and worship of this soul of love, and the hallowing to it of the flesh-desire that is its sign, is Purity.

The divine fire that fuses man and maid was not given to scorch the flesh, but to solder the life. Purity is the "single eye," the simple unity in the conceiving and using love, which makes it "full of light." As the Catholic, bound here by laws of time and sense, craves the embrace of Christ in His Sacrament because he has first learned to love Him as a Person ; so, in the order of pure love, the soul's affection, passing outwards, seeks expression in the sphere of that mortal nature wherein the soul inheres, and without whose medium life cannot fully here interpenetrate with life.

It is through this "sacramental stage" of love that life, in its human phase, is passing. The evolution of love is the measure of life's march through matter into spiritual freedom. Beneath love's elemental accidents, the material mating of the sea and field and wildwood, man has discovered the soul of love, which is of the very glory of the Logos. From this sacramental equilibrium is destined to emerge the perfect Love that neither marries nor is given in marriage, being that simple unity with which Christ and the soul are one.

And purity, that *Interimsethik* for this present time, whose jeopardy begins with its revelation, is the proportionate integrity of the mystery of love ; to guard whose sacramental unity, Marriage was made a Sacrament ; whose ordering is pure ; and whose "dis-ordering" alone is impure—and the way, not of life, but of death.

For beyond, in whatever heaven lies before those in whom life prevails and attains, love will have passed into the sole sphere of spirit and life. Eyes

cannot smile, arms cannot cling, where soul has slipped the bond of flesh ; the present body is a cloud, disparting lovers, yet like the sacramental veils it is a means and pledge of love. Blessed is this sacrament, while it endures. Well may loving hearts—if they believe in any union after death—think with dread of a cold and a silence, when there shall be no voice nor hand-clasp, nor any warmer communion than the ethereal tryst and interchange of thought, or something more unearthly still than thought.

Of what such heavenly union may mean, I neither know nor hazard anything. But I am sure that love, which is life's courier, cannot linger, as it fain would, among the roses ; and that whatever joy it may lay up for those it helps to bear forward to the goal of the great adventure, holds no regret for any mortal embrace ; for how could the vision sigh for the mirror, the substance for the sign ?

In the shortness of love's earthly sojourn in the flesh, passing as it does even here from change to change and ever in the direction interior to the flesh, we can track the course of this pilgrimage through matter to that eternal plane where we shall know as we are known. The transports of the new-born troth come to youth and girl with all the sweet illusion of an eternal bliss. The moment for which all the breathless ages have been waiting has arrived ; pretend to these two that this rapture of sight and sense is not for ever, they would answer with a joyous laugh. And how meet and beautiful that they should, and how ominous if they did not!

Yet in how brief a time the river of rapture

deepens and broadens in the blended channel, the eddies of passion still gleam and gather in the shallows, but the current flows in a calmer and more still content. Companionship—that unity that comes of the "sharing of bread" and all it stands for, that quality in ripening love most authentic and most truly sweet—begins to spread its quiet tinge over the days ; the insatiate rack and strain of physical emotion relaxes, it grows possible to taste without fever the simple happiness of "being together." Sorrow and trial come, it may be and it must be, bringing new and more interior vision, and the bond of hearts is welded more closely in the fire.

It is a phase in love's ascension, through suffering, from the sense-plane of its incarnation to the native heaven of its regnant consubstantiality with life. These two are mirroring the mystery of God's unfailing years, and drawing towards Him. They may rise no higher, but the evolution is at work.

Slowly and tenderly a new wonder dawns. Love, incarnate in these two, has awakened to consciousness of its messiahship ; it is the servant of life, and must be about life's business. Into the dual selfhood there creeps a finer thought. A secret has been whispered, the greatest in the world. The clinging hearts loose a little from each other, that they may look, and draw the closer in a strange and mutual hope.

Misers each of each, erewhile jealous even of the kith and kin that could share the looks and smiles they bartered, they can now dream of the admission of an unknown rival to their paradise—and dream

it with a thrill, because they know it for their very love made flesh and come to dwell with them. Eyes that had no vision but for their own reflex in answering eyes grow conscious of another image in the depths ; an image that is neither his nor hers, but both in new and joint creation, in seal of marriage inviolable ; an immortal incarnation of the psychic gift given and received between them ; a completion of the trinity that is love in being, whether in earth or heaven.

Here, again, is a phase in love's ascent from self and sense ; a subconsciousness of its parentage in God, and of its patient service to His glory in the passionate adventure that is life. We may not be conscious of our destiny, but it is manifoldly presaged in us, and our most elemental instincts rehearse it daily to our lessoning and our judgment.

It is thus that the embrace of earthly love, so transitory, so elusive of remembrance, is redeemed from death and made immortal. Humanity is the quarry from which God is hewing ; every soul that is born into this world is an eligible stone, capable to be squared and shaped for service, albeit lowly, in the heavenly Temple ; through every life that materialises in flesh of man or woman, is presumptively extended the possible material for that Spiritual House, which "is built of stones made ready before they are brought thither."

Love, we know, is the Architect of that Temple ; by Love its precious marbles are prospected and delved for, by Love's blows and biting sculptures its plinths and pillars are prepared. Yet its rough

material, too, is the creation of love. All human parenthood, be it blessed by God or in despite to His law, is life's creative increment to the field of its own eternal harvest, the Kingdom of God. In every child born into this world, be it the fruit of prayerful Christian love or of unsanctified desire, life has wrought by love, however blindly and crudely, to its great end of immortality. Every little human baby may be a Bride-elect of Christ, destined to be one with God in that new Bridal which is also a New Birth, and so to realise life's eternal triumph over death.

Could this sacred biologic mystery be received in true vision by Christian man and woman, the constructive grace called Purity would be less misconceived and better honoured in the world.

XIV

The Ripening and Reaping of Love

Yet this forging of life's rough material, as has been said, is not love's last or only service to the Kingdom of God. As life advances, as between maturing mind and cooling blood there comes a better equipoise, love gently lifts its glowing veil and reveals more interior values. In these two it has fulfilled its cosmic ends, upon them levied due tax and toll for life its lord. Now, for them its graces, for them its directer, tenderer culture ; for they themselves, too, are flowers of life—and the time of fruits is nearing.

For Christian souls, what more genial soil for virtue, what air more pellucid to the suns of grace, than the attempered oneness of a wedded love that time has proved with its reverses ? Here is a bond that has come to lie so lightly that its constraint is scarcely conscious ; a ring of purest gold so thin and pliant that the two hearts it clamps forget that they are bound. (Ah, let but the Shadow appear, with lifted finger threatening freedom—they will discover then, that they are bound !)

Yet this experienced interfusion of two souls is itself a truer liberty than that single slavery to self which self-love is heard at times to praise as free. Here is a double freedom ; for each is twice free.

For the two have passed into one another ; perhaps through tribulation, perhaps even through strife unlearned, they have learned each the common multiple of mind that comes with better emulations, the common mould of thought that time must form where two have given, each to other, the hostage of the heart. What servitude can dwell with unity ?

Long and long they have been storming, he from that side, she from this, that mole of selfishness which disparts us all. Through a loving war of little sacrifices, gracious tactics learned of love, they have won through to that citadel which is hardly reached by passion, and from whose quiet fastness mortals seldom ask to stray. Doubt and pride and variance, the shadows which fell at times across their glowing heyday and seemed to strike the chills of death, are past ; mind has flowed into mind and tempered it ; the yoked disparity has become a disparate unity.

For the perfecting of true love is not forced unison, but discovered harmony. All love is by nature one ; and earthly love, like that which Christ inspires, must beat out through trials and reverses the true vision of its own ideal. There is a deeper oneness than the mere assimilation at which new lovers strain. The first so sweet illusion, that each in all things must discover in himself, in herself, the other's image, that every unlike thought or standpoint is a barrier to be fought down : this fancy serves its time, but experience has in store a larger learning, seldom to be gained without some cost of tears.

Love has a better purpose than to people the

world with "doubles"; mere likeness is not union; often it is the ground of satiety and discord; love forges, not duplicates, but counterparts and complements. The enfolding glamour passes; the idioms of character emerge—the varying standpoints, the diverse tastes and tones of thought; and in the first discoveries, it may be, there comes a little smart of disappointment, a sense of drawing apart; yet this, too, is illusion, a reactive stage in the strange work of love. For it is yet to be learned that the perfect way consists, not in the coercion of these differences, nor yet in their concealment, but in their co-ordination; that the taking of love's stronghold lies indeed in the siege of self, yet not of personality, but of selfishness.

These two, then, have not killed their individualities in mutual combat of concession; they have, at Love's joint teaching, adapted them into concert. And often this experience—this slow learning and unlearning, this novitiate of self-wounding falls and perplexed retracings of the way—seems to be the desert and dark night of love; but if it can be passed—and "two are better than one, for if one falls, the other can lift up his fellow"—I think love's quality is proved, and its perfecting assured: for the way that love has found is the way of life.

Two human souls! They are at best jangled instruments, toneless with self-love and folly, overstrung with pride; love comes, with patient fingers strings them more nearly to the diapason whereto He tunes the harmony of the Sons of God: and in the long work there is, it may be, pain and discord; at last, proportion, counterpoint, "one clear harp of

divers tones" for God Himself to play upon : shall there not arise a richer music than before ?

For in this, and not in dower of blessed children only, the Marriage Sacrament bears fruit : that those whom God has joined in this true union are not two persons grown alike through self-suppression, but one new and ampler being, tempered of the best in both. Well would it augur for a nation's soul, well were the way of God prepared into a people's heart, if all its "silver" and "golden" weddings proved their claim to names so gracious !

And when, upon this golden evening of true love, there falls the dreaded Shadow, and the hour is come for one, "in the dusk of life that's left," to walk alone : what then ? Has love done its work ? Is there no hope of conscious personal reunion, where Christ is universal Bridegroom, and all are "one" in Him, as He and His Father are One ? Does the greater exclude the less ?

This union wonderful and beautiful, which has been the means and sphere of so long growth in Him ; which He has come to bless so often, as to a second Cana, with the ever-new wine of His grace ; wherein at His altar it has seemed as though each soul, holding one of His hands, had been conscious of the twin-soul through the beating of His Heart : if such a mystery can be discovered mortal with the body, if its lovely promise prove but an illusion to decoy us to our destiny with Him, however blest : then surely He is less than kind or true, and Heaven, which can so exploit love, cannot truly be Love's paradise and crown.

The question "goes in to that which is within the veil." No sentiment, no wish that sires the thought, can answer it. There are those who tell us that they have seen and heard those dear ones, whose eyes they have closed ; we can only bow to their assurance, and respect at least their sincerity. For us who have had no such experience, while we have a sure and certain hope, there is need of the utmost caution in thought, and of great reserve in conjecture. Sure we may be that if this present body be necessary to the perfect work of love, then all our studies in the mystery of love are vain, and there is neither love in God, nor any spirit in love, nor any profit in our holy jealousy to bear it inviolate into a heavenly plane ; surely then they who have truly loved are of all men and women most miserable.

But we must not forget that love, while its true seat is in the soul, finds here its whole expression in conscious thought and sense ; and that thought, as here we know it, functions in a physical medium. We cannot tell how disbodied souls think, far less how they feel : we have no knowledge, therefore, how they love. To base our dreams of future intercourse with our loved ones upon the glib assurance of spiritists, who represent the departed as holding communion with embodied persons after our present organic mode of reasoned mentality and speech ; to think of life, unclothed with matter, in terms of the dimensions of time and space : is to forget the distinction between the spiritual and the material, which was one of our Lord's first lessons on earth.[1]

[1] St. John iii 3–8.

We know not much of spiritual science ; but only they know anything at all for whom its first postulate is a reverent agnosticism. All our present knowledge of that mystery, the soul of man, consists in a few inductions, slight and inconclusive, from the phenomena of subconsciousness. It is but of late years that we have learned—if we have learned—to " psycho-analyse " the complex of our human life ; our researches have scarcely yet begun to co-ordinate the laws of that hidden factor of man's life—if indeed it be but one and not itself a complex virtually infinite—which, living and working behind the brain of flesh, we associate with his survival of death and call the soul.

No convincing concept has yet been formed of the nature of this sub-intellectual part of us ; its seeming caprices baffle our most careful search ; it is, for us, a law unto itself. We assume that, when we deal with it, we are dealing with the " soul " ; if it be not so, if the soul lie yet beyond it, she is only yet more removed from the laws and processes of our primary and conscious understanding. How then, unbrained, unbodied, does the soul " love " ?

That she loves, is the rationale of her existence and her hope of immortality. Yet all we know of her, or all that we do not, seems to bid us think that she loves after an immeasurably different mode from that in which we know love. Our brains are developed for physical concepts and percepts, and bound by the trammels of time and space : how shall they serve us to the understanding, even to the conception, of a naked " spiritual soul " ?

With this reserve, so necessary and so glibly and almost universally forgotten, we may take comfort. The whole genius of Christian intuition (that is, the knowledge of the soul herself, which is deeper than that of the understanding) heartens us to believe in eternal re-union for the true love that is in Christ. In Christ, I say ; for, while I assert no negation and deny no man's hope, I know nothing, apart from Christ, of any eternal life at all to live or love in.

But if through Christ's Spiritual Flesh God has struck the roots of eternal Life into the soul of a man and woman, and made and taught them to be sacraments to each other of that Life's increase, it is impossible that their severance should be a condition of their perfecting in Him.

In all truest sense of union they are one, because their psychic fibres have interpenetrated here. In that plane of thought, which is behind and beneath thought, love has welded them together ; in all that personality can mean, there has been long process of mysterious vital interchange ; simply because they must now seek great part of themselves in one another, their affinity must ever bind or relate them in the Heart of Christ.

I think it is possible, perhaps terribly possible, to be spiritually linked with other souls more inextricably than we know. Such internexures of soul-stuff, being rather what we are than what we think or still desire, do not stand necessarily in the conscious remembrance of the mind ; and they may contain fear as well as hope. To those with whom here we intimately relate ourselves, and surely most of all

in the closest of all physical relations, we give—and take from them—more than we think. The thought, I repeat, has fears connoted by its hope.

I am not surmising that all married persons who survive death are thus eternally related. Such a position would be perplexed by the case of second marriage. For though it is a law both Christian and biological that love's physical relation makes of two one flesh, it is nowhere ordained or written that such relation, even though blessed by God, must needs make them one soul. Our Lord's answer to the Sadducees,[1] while it in no way discourages our hopes of love's reunion, conclusively forbids us to think of such reunion, not only after any earthly mode, but with any sort of presumption based on forms or predilections here. The Lord knoweth them that are His; and them that are one another's.

Nay, when with cautious hope I speak of eternal union, I suppose a true and effectual psychic union here. And I speak not from sentiment, but from what I take to be a common Christian intuition of spiritual psychology, when I submit myself unable to imagine the breaking of such a bond, either in the nature of the case, or in the providence of God Who is Love. And, least of all, when prayer and Requiem have gone before to seal it.

Yet the mode and expression of such continued union will, I say, differ from our unions here, in the measure of the difference in the mode and expression of our life. "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 30.

as the angels of God in heaven." There is in that World no marriage after any sacramental mode, for there can be no sacrament where all outward sign and material have given place for ever to the True. There is Love's unbodied essence, and of its joys we may surmise no more than that they must surpass our clayey hopes as heaven surpasses earth.

For our longings and our ideals too will have suffered the great change ; and what we now pray for and desire is but a faulty measure of the new estimates and values we shall carry from our purging. We cling to fleshy cravings, because we know no other ; we writhe and weep for the wonted sweetness we must lose : we can form no picture of the transcendent compensation that may lie in store for us, because we have not adapted the spiritual organs for its correspondence. The crucibles of God are stranger than we deem ; they will greatly change us ; and they, too, are Love.

Let us rest content ; the endowment of the day is sufficient for the day, and our easy claims on Life must wait upon our qualification. Let those whom God has joined together look to the thing they have ; let no selfish domination, no pride of possession or forgetfulness of God, put them asunder. Firmly I believe and truly, that in measure as marriage is here honoured as a Sacrament, in that measure shall be the abiding bliss of its essential bond, when the Sacred Heart of Love shall be the Life-sphere of His own.

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